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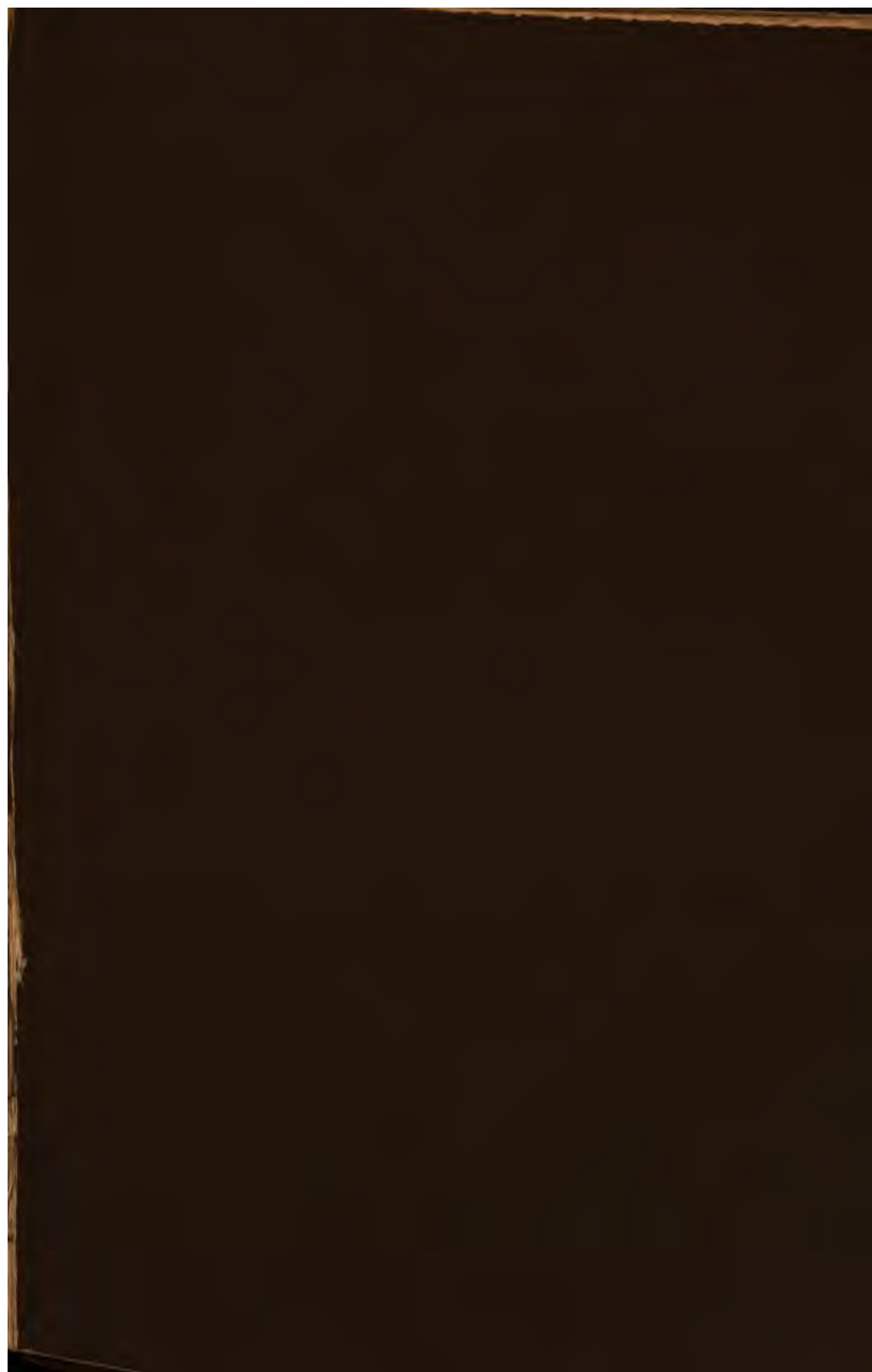
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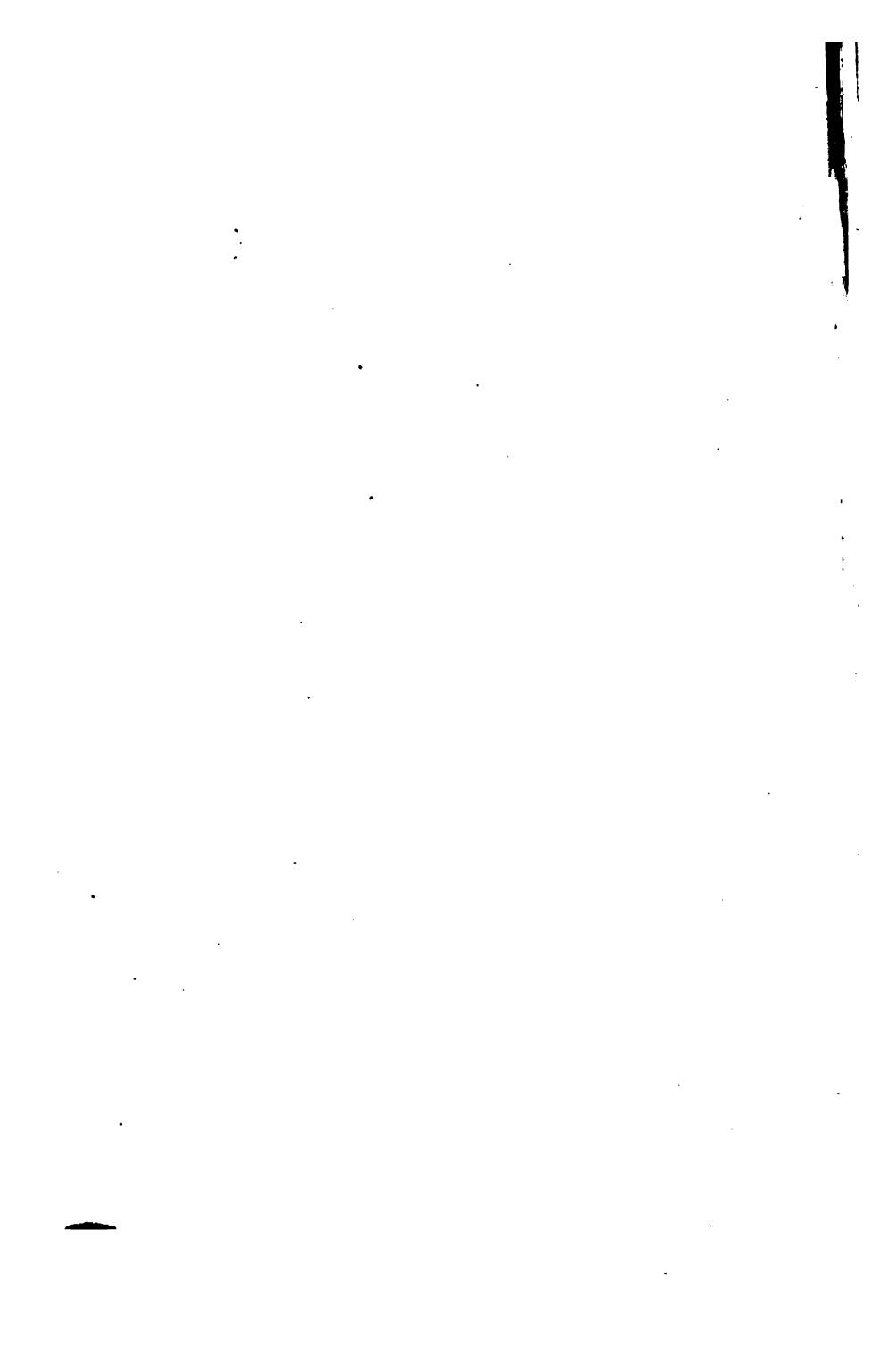
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THE BOOK

OF

The Knight of the Tower, Landry



THE BOOK

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OF THE

Knight of the Tower, Landry

WHICH HE MADE FOR THE INSTRUCTION OF HIS DAUGHTERS

(By way of selection)

NOW DONE INTO ENGLISH

BY

ALEXANDER VANCE

DUBLIN

MOFFAT AND CO., 6 D'OLIER STREET

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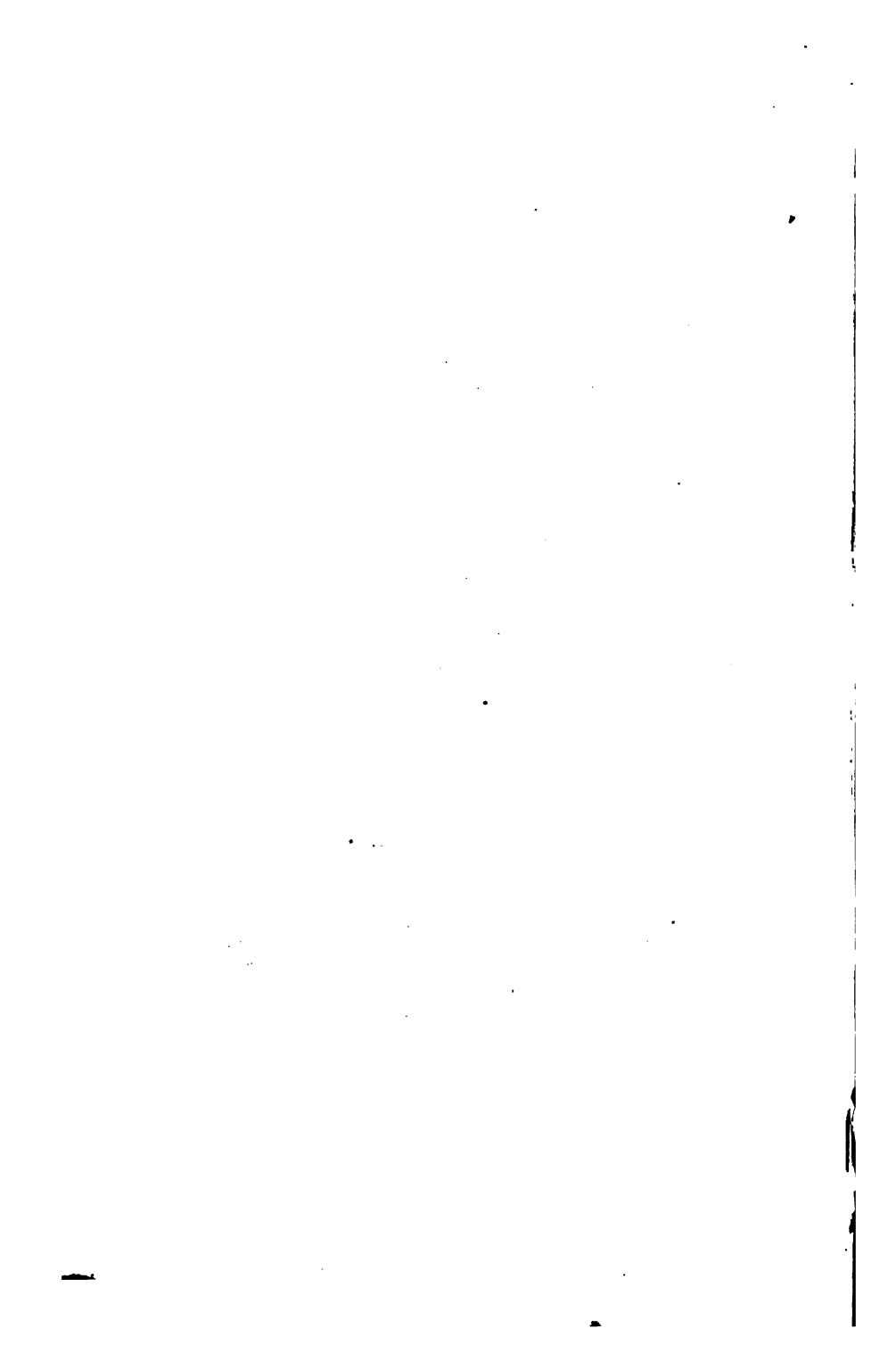
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PREFACE.

AS the Knight of the Tower has left us, himself, a prologue to his book, in which he sufficiently explains its general character, it is unnecessary that the reader should be troubled with a second; or, at any rate, a long one. So I have little more to say than to state, that, so far as the severity of our manners would permit, or as the work itself appeared to me to be worthy of reproduction, it is now reproduced. It will, I trust, supply a link which has been long wanting to the more judicious appreciation of middle-age literature and life. And this, as well, by showing us what *language, conversation*, then was in the mouths of those who must have given the *tone* to society; as by affording us a glimpse into the interior of the household of a great feudal baron, a head of a family; an accomplished and a Christian gentleman. And though it may not appear to an age so self-satisfied, so unreasoning, and so prejudiced as our own, to afford any adequate apology for the *relative coarseness* of the effusions of the troubadours, contemporary chronicles and writings; it will, I fancy, be allowed, at least in some degree, *to account* for the same.

It will also be found to throw much curious light on the education, the superstitions, the learning, the manners of the feudal times ; as also upon the reciprocal relation in which parent and child then stood with regard to one another ; as well as each towards society in general ; their equals, superiors, and dependants.

The book of our Knight is one which has been very differently canvassed. To say nothing of the verdict passed on it by Dibdin ; how, little but two centuries after it was written, was even an English Chief Justice from having been able to catch either the genius of the work, or of the age which elicited it, the following extract will show. It is from the *Book of Husbandry*, published in 1534, by Sir Anthony Fitz-Herbert. Speaking of the strictness with which husband and wife should account to one another for the expenses incurred in marketing, he continues, " I could, perhaps, open the eyes of husbands to the different methods which their wives have of cheating them ; and, in like manner, those of the wives to those by which their husbands impose upon them. But if I did, I should only be initiating them to more subtle methods of deceiving one another, than they were already possessed of the key to. For this reason, it seems to me better to be silent, for fear of falling into the error of the *Knight of the Tower*, who had several daughters, and who, out of his fatherly solicitude for their welfare, composed a book, with the best of intentions, to teach them how to flee the ways of wickedness, and to follow those of virtue. * * And, by his said book, he has enabled both men and women to become better acquainted with

the vices, the wickedness, the subtleties, the snares, the deceits of this world, than ever, otherwise, they could have been. * * But, for my part, I leave to women to transact their own business with their own understandings." Nor from a considerable portion of his countrymen has he met with a much more favourable construction. "The author," says M. de Montaignon, *De la Lecture des Livres François au xiv^e siècle*, in his *History of Romance*, and *Legrand d'Aussy*, in a special article; and which for that reason, should have been deeper meditated, as it was more likely to be depended on; have passed a sentence upon it, about as much devoid of common sense. According to them, the book is but a tissue of *capucinades*, (monks' tales,) or of obscenities. Without being exactly able to discover these alleged *capucinades*, I am willing to allow that it had been better for all parties, had he made a more judicious or restrained use of his Bible. But, to talk of the book being obscene, so much as in intention, much less in fact, is downright nonsense. What they more particularly point to, is the accounts of two parties overtaken in churches, in the act of fornication; with some few reflections and conclusions, it may be a little unlucky, and even silly; but this is very far from constituting a charge so outrageous. In the first place, it would be very hard to believe, that a man, evidently well brought up; who had received the best education which the age could secure; familiar, as well with the world as with books; and who, above all, was the father of those whom he was addressing, had been in any way less nice or circumspect than were those of his

own rank about him. With the exception of a few passages, rather naïve than gross, he has evidenced, on the contrary, a singular delicacy throughout. In truth, it would be difficult to find, at that epoch, an analysis and an appreciation more exquisite; and, at the same time, sentiments more respectable, than the arguments placed by him in the mouth of his wife, in the conversation which forms the subject-matter of one of the longest and most able chapters in his book. But to say that there is even coarseness in the work, one must be content to forget what the pulpit was at that time; forget what the songs, the stories were; that women were admitted to the churches; that they listened to the tales of the gleemen, who had free entry to all the halls of all the châteaux and the houses. In those times women, at no period of their life, were ever ignorant, so to speak, either of matters or of their appellations: propriety then consisted in a well-regulated deportment; and had not, as yet, extended itself to the police of words. It would be much nearer to the mark to say, that the book of the Knight evidences, on the contrary, a delicacy and an amount of reserve, which, had they been wanting, considering the age, it should have been a matter of no sort of surprise to us."

Forewarned is fore-armed, was evidently the motto of our Knight. He knew the world; he knew the times that he lived in; and he judged, and I think rightly, that his daughters could not well too early be initiated to the mysteries and the perils of the same. And without wishing to offer any sort of disrespect to the young women of the rising generation; or yet to their mammas,

their nurses, their ladies'-maids, their governesses, or their school-mistresses; I may yet be allowed to question, if there is one in ten of them (however they came by their information,) who is not as informed, in every way, at seventeen, as were the daughters of the Knight of the Tower, at the close of their plain-speaking old father's sermon.

So perfectly do I coincide, in my estimate of this work, with the gentleman, M. de Montaiglon, whose apology for the same I have just given; that I may safely say, I can hardly recollect to have ever read any book which impressed me, whether from the elevation of its tone, its style, its tact, its solicitude, or anything else about it, as having been more the work of a man of the world, a Christian, a parent, and a gentleman; or as having been better adapted to secure the end for which its author purposed it.

I have only to add, that the edition from which this translation is made, is that of the *Bibliothèque Elzévérienne*: Paris, 1854.

December, 1862.





THE BOOK
OF
THE KNIGHT OF THE TOWER, LANDRY;
WHICH HE MADE FOR THE INSTRUCTION OF HIS
DAUGHTERS.

AND FIRST, THE PROLOGUE.

IN the beginning of April, in the year of our Lord thirteen hundred and seventy-one, I was in my garden, in the shade, all sad and pensive; or if I was a little comforted, it was at the chirpings and the carolings of the wild young broods; the merle, the tit, the throstle, which were welcoming in the spring, with all their quaint notes, so gay and sprightly. Ravished with this gentle music, my soul was pierced, and back my memory strayed to times long gone; and I began to turn with myself, how, in the days of my youth, I had been held in thralldom to the God of Love, and of all the miseries which I had undergone in his service, as had many another lover. But, for all my sufferings, he more than recompensed me in the gift that he made me; for she was practised to all honour, and to every excellence; and hers was courtly carriage and demeanour; of the good, she was the best, and, as it seemed to me, the flower.

was all my delight. For in those days, I wrote songs, odes, lays, roundelays, ballads, and the best that I was able. But death, who harries all, took her, which cost me many a pain and sorrow. So that for more than twenty years I remained sad and inconsolable. For never, with any distance, or with any time, can perfect love forget; but ever will pasture with the past.

And thus, as at the time I was moralizing; and as I looked before me, I saw my daughters coming, and towards whom my soul's desire was, that all honour and advantage might be theirs; for they were yet but young and small; nor, poor things, overburdened with experience. So that they would require to be early taken in hand, and to be gently broken, by happy ensamples and sentences, after the manner of Queen Prines, of Hungary, who knew so well how to discipline and to train her daughters; as may be seen in her book. And so it was, as I saw them coming, that I bethought me of the wild young time, when I, with other mad sparks, used to go caracoling about the world, in Poitou, and different parts. And also returned to my memory, all the carryings on which they used to have, and tell me of, with the ladies and gentlewomen, whom they were for ever making up to. For, never a day went over, but one or another was after them. And if they were sent about their business with the first, they turned to the next. And met they with a good reception, or met they with a bad reception, it was all one to them. For neither sense of shame, nor of decency was in them; so brazen and bare-faced were they; so plausible and ready with their tongues. For the most part, to amuse themselves was all they wanted; nor had they a thought, but how to practise upon gentlewomen, and to gad about with their tales; some true, some false; whence came many a cruel hurt and scandal, and for which there was neither ground

nor occasion. And there is not, on this earth, a more detestable treason than to deceive respectable gentlewomen or to get them into trouble ; for many are imposed upon by the horrible imprecations that are sworn to them. And, many a time, have I argued with them and said, "How can you go about, perjuring yourselves, this way? for no man has any business to swear to, or go after more than one." But so full of disorder were they, never a man of them would listen. And inasmuch as I saw, that the time passing was but too like the time passed ; I bethought me that I would make a book, wherein I would have collected the memorable instances of admirable women, and of their carriage ; so as to show, by their pattern, what was true feminacy and good conduct ; and also how, by their virtues, they were held in honour and estimation, and will ever continue to be so. And also, in like manner, I determined to write, to point out and put in my book, the contempt that is the meed of wicked and unseemly women, so as to serve as a warning, of all the mischief which may befall those who are reflected on, blamed, or defamed. And so, for all these reasons which I have said ; considering of my daughters, whom I saw so small, I thought that I would make a book, wherein they might see how to carry themselves in the world, and have set before them the good and the evil which had passed in it, and thus, the better, be enabled to judge of the present. For the world is a mighty perilous thing, and envious and marvellous ; for the man who will smile on you, and take you by the hand, in your presence, will turn his back and pull a face at you. And forasmuch as I saw what a hard thing it was to know the world, as it now went, and for the farther reasons of which I have told you ; leaving the alley, I went to another, where I knew two clerks and two chaplains, of my household, to be. And I told them how I was about to enter on a book,

to teach my daughters the art of conversation ; as, also, to enable them to govern themselves, and to distinguish between the right and the wrong. So I set them all four to work, to read and to extract from the books I had, as the Bible, the Gestes of the Kings, and Chronicles of France, of Greece, of England, and many another foreign land. And all these books, I had them to read to me ; and every time that they came to any passage to my purpose, I made them note it, on the spot, so as to put it in my own ; which I did not turn into rhyme, but left in prose, both because I thought it would be briefer, and more intelligible ; and, as so, a more acceptable token of all the affection I bear my dearest children, whom I love as a father ought to love ; and whose heart no greater joy shall ever prove, than that they may be turned, by his labours, to the love and honour of God, and had in the delight and estimation of their neighbours and the world. And in as much as every father, and every mother, by the ordinance of God and nature, ought to instruct their children to seek the true and right way, and to abhor the wrong ; as well for the salvation of their souls, as out of a respect to their mortal tenements, I have made two books ; one for my sons, and the other for my girls, to show them how they are to demean themselves. And in this labour, no ensample that I could hear of has been omitted, whereby they might gather, either how to seek the good, or to eschew the evil. So it can scarcely happen, that they will ever find themselves so situated, but that, upon a little recollection, something or other will recur to them for their guidance.



CHAPTER I.

THERE is not, in this world, a more noble or a more delightful thing, than to hear, or to read the chronicles of old, which have been left to us by our ancestors; whereby we were to see, as in a glass, the times gone by; and from them, and their notable instances to learn how we, as they, were to pursue the good, and to eschew the evil. And so I spoke to them, and said, Daughters dear, seeing that I am now an old man, and that I have been longer in the world than you; it is my wish to show you a little, what it is, as far as my capacity goes, which is not much. And if I have undertaken it, it is out of the love I bear you, and the longing that I have to see your hearts and your affections turned to the fear and love of God; and that you may be had in honour, as well in this world as in the world to come. For, assuredly, all true wealth, and honour, virtue and safety, to man or woman, comes of Him, and of the grace of his Holy Spirit. And it is He who gives long life or short; earthly and worldly goods, as pleaseth Him best; for all things come of his will and ordinance. And also will he recompense the duty and the service which we owe to him, an hundred-fold. And for this reason, my dear daughters, you must serve such a Lord, who can requite an hundred-fold.

CHAPTER II.

Here tells of what one should do when they have risen.

This Chapter simply inculcates the efficacy of prayer; as well on rising as returning to rest, and in the watches of the night. They were to pray to the Virgin, the Saints, &c., as well as to God. They were to repeat the *Laudate Dominum, omnes gentes, benedicamus patrem et filium.*

CHAPTER III.

Of two Knights who loved two Sisters.

This Chapter the reader may as well read to him, or herself.

IN the histories of Constantinople, it is told of an emperor, that had two daughters; the youngest of whom was what daughter should be, for she loved God and feared him, and in all the breaches of the night failed never to pray for the dead. And also they slept in the one bed, she and her sister. And as often as the elder would awake, and hear her sister at her prayers, she would push and stop her; telling her, that she could not get to sleep with her noise. But what with youthhood, the ease and plenty in which they were nourished, they came to be taken with two Knights, brothers, pleasing and good-looking gentlemen. And so long went on their loves and their sweetness, that either came to know of the other's matters. And an appointment was made with the two Knights to come to them privily by night. And when the one who thought to have come in unto the younger had drawn aside the curtains, incontinent there appeared, all about the damsel, as it were a thousand dead men, in their shrouds; which threw him into such a trepidation and an agony, that he was overtaken of a fever and carried to his bed. But with the other it was not so, for he went through the curtains, and got the emperor's daughter with child. And when the emperor heard tell, that his daughter was with child, he had her drowned in a well, in the dark; and the Knight, he had flayed alive. And so, for their crimes, they both died. But the other daughter was saved, as I told you, and am telling you. And as soon as it was day, and it was known, everywhere, that the Knight was upset, and in bed, she, who was at the bottom of it, came to him, and asked him, what it was

had come over him? So he told her truly, how, when he had drawn the curtains, thinking to go in to her, he had seen, clear as noon-day, as it were a cloud of dead men, all in their shrouds, round about her; and that it was this loathsome and appalling sight which had driven him out of his wits, and that he had not yet got over his fright. And when the lady heard the truth, she marvelled, and thanked God on her knees, who had thus saved her from perishing and from dishonour. And from that time forth, she never omitted to pray and to cry to God, all the times that she awoke in the night; and supplicated, even more earnestly than before, for the dead; carrying herself meekly, chastely and soberly. Nor was it long till a great King of Greece asked her, of her father, in marriage, who gave her. And she was ever after known as an exemplary and a sober matron; and, as such, was she spoken of, and admitted of all. Whilst her elder sister, who was light and gamesome, came, as you have heard, to dishonour and her end. So, my dear daughters, take warning by this example, how, in the watches of the night, you resign yourselves afresh to slumber, ere, as this emperor's daughter, you have prayed for the dead.

CHAPTER IV.

Here tells of a young lady that a great lord was purposing to violate.

The moral inculcated by this Chapter, being the same as that of the last, it is omitted.

CHAPTER V.

Here tells what one ought to do on rising.

The Knight again urges on them the necessity of prayer; telling them, "to be sure they say their prayers on an empty stomach, for that a full spirit never yet was a devout one."

CHAPTER VI.

Here tells of two daughters of a Knight; of whom one was devout, and the other gluttonous.

The Knight here tells us, pleasantly enough, of a lady, who, even before her marriage, had been in the habit of getting up in the night, and helping herself in the larder, of which she used to purloin the keys. He then goes on to acquaint us, "that when her lord tried every means he could to recover her of her ill life, but in vain; it came, that one night, awaking, and missing her, he got up in a fury, and throwing his gown over his back, he went to the kitchen, where he found her, with the housekeeper and two varlets; eating and drinking, and kicking up such a delight, than one would have hardly heard God thunder. And when the lord saw all this riot, he got into an awful rage, and took a stick and laid it over the back of a varlet who was hugging one of the maids. And as the wood was dry and brittle, it broke; one of the splinters flying into the eye of his wife, who was alongside; by which mishap and accident, she came to lose it, &c." He then goes on to say, how the whole establishment went to the dogs, &c.

CHAPTER VII.

Here is shown, how all women ought to fast.

NEXT, my dear daughters, you ought to fast as long as you are single, three days in the week, the better to mortify the flesh, that it wax not wanton, and you may dedicate yourselves, more chastely and holily, to the service of God, who will have you in his keeping, and repay you double. And if you cannot fast three days, at least fast on Friday, in memory of the precious blood and passion of Jesus Christ, who suffered for you. And if you cannot support yourselves on bread and water, at any rate abstain from anything which had life; for it is a marvellous propitiation, as I heard of a Knight who was at the wars between the Christians and the Saracens. It happened that one of the Christians had had his head

severed from his body with a battle-axe ; but the head, he said, never ceased for a moment, to hollo and to demand confession till a priest could be found. And when he had heard the head confess, he asked it, by what immunity it was enabled to speak, deprived of its body ? To which the head told him, that God never left good actions unrequited ; and that he had, all his life, abstained from flesh on the Wednesday, for on that day the Son of God was betrayed ; and from tasting anything which had blood in it on the Friday ; and that, in return for this observance, God had not suffered him to be damned, or to die in his sins, before they were confessed. And this is an excellent example to show, how one should never touch, on a Friday, anything that had been killed. And, in addition to this, daughters dear, it is advisable to fast, the Saturdays, in honour of our Lady, and of holy virginity, so that she may extend to you the grace to preserve your maidenhood unsullied, to the glory of God and the salvation of your souls ; and that no evil temptation may ever come to master you. * * *

CHAPTER VIII.

Here tells of a woman who fell into a pit.

This silly, allegorical, half-witted old monkish tale is omitted.

CHAPTER IX.

Here tells of a citizen's wife, who died without having the courage to confess her crime.

This Chapter is omitted, on the same account that the last was.

CHAPTER X.

Here is shown, how all women ought to be courteous.

NEXT, my lovely girls, remember to be courteous and unassuming; for there is no more beauteous virtue, nor any that will sooner gain to you the grace of God, or the love of man, than gentleness or courtesy. For gentleness will tame the most untamable and unapproachable spirit, as may be seen by the hawk, of its nature savage, but which, by kindness, you may win, and bring down from the branch to perch upon your wrist; and this he never would have done, had you treated him roughly or brutally. Seeing then that courtesy will dompt the savage bird, which, by nature, is devoid of reason, much more should it temper and disarm the untractableness of man or woman; be they ever so haughty, fierce or forbidding. Courtesy is the only path and unfailing passport to the hearts and affections of men. It alone can tame the untamable spirit; can mitigate and kill the little angers which assail us. And, for this reason, nothing is to be desired before courteousness. I knew a great lord, of these parts, who in the time when he was able to follow the wars, wrought more knights and squires to his ends, to his pleasure, by his affability, than any of the rest of them were able to do, by dint of money, or any other recourse. I mean Messire Pierre de Craon, who, above all the knights I ever knew, was the one most deserving of praise and honour. And I also know great ladies, and others of a wonderful condescension, and who by their graciousness, have won to themselves the love of great and small. So, in order to show yourselves courteous to little and insignificant people, you must speak to them softly and patiently, and be considerate and unpresuming in your answers. They can more effectually contribute towards your fame and odour

than can the great ones. For, to tender duty and respect to the powerful and considerable, is only to give them their due, and what they are entitled to exact. But condescensions which are shown to homely gentle folk ; to poor men and poor women, come of the heart, and of a generous natural. And in proportion as these poor people are conciliated, accordingly will the honourer be honoured ; for they will everywhere noise abroad the grace of him or her. So, you see, of little folk come honour and advancement, and of them are they propagated. And I remember well, being in the company of great lords and ladies, to have seen a lady, and one of the greatest there too, take off her hat, and curtsey to a common blacksmith. And when one gentleman said to her, "Madame, you have taken off your hat to a blacksmith !" she answered him, "Yes ; and it had been a less reproach to have left it on to a gentleman, than to have foreborne to take it off to him." And this redounded to an incredible admiration for the good lady.

CHAPTER XI.

How they ought to carry themselves, without twisting their heads right and left.

A GAIN, at your prayers, or at mass, or elsewhere, do not be as the tortoise or the crane ; for women who roll their heads from side to side, or twist them, like a weasel, on their shoulders, for all the world resemble those animals. Let your carriage be straight and firm, as that of the lymer, which is an animal that looks straight before him, without regarding to one side or the other. Keep your whole body erect and compact, and all your members in their natural position, and your eyes before you. And if, at any time, you have occasion to look to the right, or the left, turn face and body together. And this will give

you the reputation of being straightforward, and to be depended on. For those will ever be esteemed but light, who go wriggling and coiling themselves about.

CHAPTER XII.

Here tells of her that lost the King of England, on account of her ridiculous manner.

NOW, as I would particularly wish you to carry in your minds the example of the King of Denmark's daughters, I will tell you of them. There are four Kings within the seas, whose habit it was anciently, to ally themselves out of a regard to their dignity; without any sort of respect to territory or inheritance; and never, save to the daughters of Kings, or princely houses; and to parties, in addition to this, who were noticed of for their good-manners, bearing, carriage, and principles. And it was their custom also to have it seen, were they made, in every way, as women should be made, and if they were calculated to bring them lineage. These iiij Kings are the King of France, who is the most great and noble of them all; next, the King of Spain; the third, the King of England; the fourth, the King of Hungary, who is hereditary mareschal of the Christians in all their wars against the infidels. And it came that the King of England was to marry. And having heard that the King of Denmark had iiij surpassing lovely daughters, and all well born; and that, besides, the King was a man of much sobriety, and the Queen a grave and prudent matron, he sent certain Knights and Ladies, of the most wary and advised that his kingdom could furnish, to see these girls. So they crossed the seas, and came into Denmark. And when the King and Queen saw the messengers, they were greatly pleased and flattered, and they enter-

tained them and amused them for iiij days; but no one could say, for a certainty, which they would elect. So the girls all dressed themselves out as fine as they could, and made the most of themselves. Now, among those that went, there were a Knight and a lady, of a wonderful cunning and penetration; and who, however little apparently they might have, yet had their eyes and their ears open to everything was said and done; and occasionally these two would draw them into conversation. And it appeared to them, that although the eldest was the best looking, she was anything but the steadiest; for she had a hasty way of looking, and from side to side, and her head was always rolling about. The ij girl they found attractive in the extreme, as well in her manners as in her conversation; but she had a trick of talking too much, and of replying before she had thoroughly understood what it was was put to her. The third was the least beautiful of the three, but she was by far the most pleasing; and in her port and manner retiring and subdued. And she spoke little, and what she did speak was with deliberation and to the purpose. And her looks were more humble and serious than were those of any other of the iiij. So the ambassadors and messengers came to the conclusion that they would return toward the King, their lord, and give in their report of what they had seen, and that it would then be for him to make his choice. And so they went to the King and Queen to take their leave of them. And they thanked them for all the civilities they had showed them, and the respect they had paid them; and they told them that they would render a faithful account to their master touching the matter of their daughters, and that then it would be for him to make his election. Then the King and Queen made them handsome presents. And then they returned into England, and related to their lord, the encouraging reception they had met with from

the King and Queen. And, after, they told him all they thought regarding the personal appearance of the daughters, and of their manners and dispositions. And there was enough canvassed and said of them. And many insisted that he should take the eldest, or the second, as they were the more honourable; but that it would be best to have the eldest. And when they had all delivered their opinions, the King, who was a wise man himself, and of a strong natural sense, spoke the last, and said, "My ancestors never allied themselves out of covetousness; but ever with an eye to honour, or out of a love to the woman they took, or for their pleasure. But I have always seen, that it is more hazardous to choose a wife for her charms, or one's own pleasure, than it is one of a deliberate bearing, and a steady disposition, where dignified withal. For there are no seniorities, nor yet are there any features, that are to be compared with, or can surpass a loving manner. And there is not, beneath this heaven, so great a felicity as to have a safe wife; one to be relied on, and of a good presence. As this, there is no such nobility. And for this reason, I have determined for the third daughter, and will have no other." Then he sent and got her; at which the two elder sisters were in high dudgeon and disdain. And thus the one that had the surest manner became Queen of England. Whilst the eldest lost her chance on account of the levity of her address, and for that she either could not, or would not look straight before her. And the second lost hers, because she was in too big a hurry to reply, and talked too much. So, daughters fair, take good example by these daughters of the King of Denmark, and neither have your eyes perking this way nor that; nor yet do not be twisting your necks about. Whenever you may want to look, at whatever it may be, turn head and body together; and do not talk too much, for whoever talks needlessly, cannot, at all times,

be talking sense. And you should always thoroughly have caught the meaning of what is said to you, before you reply ; and if you allow a little interval to elapse between hearing and answering, your rejoinder is more likely to be weighty, and to the purpose. For, as the proverb says, "About as much profit has he who hears, and does not understand, as he who hunts and never overtakes," as did each of our two girls.

CHAPTER XIII.

Here tells of her whom the Knight of the Tower dropped, through her too much lightness.

A GAIN, my lovely girls, when on this head, I will tell you what occurred to myself. Once on a time, it happened that they wanted to marry me to a very beautiful and noble young lady, whose father and mother were both in life. And so my lord, my father, must have me to see her ; and all sorts of good cheer and entertainment we met with. And so I took a good look at her of whom they spoke to me ; and presently, falling into conversation, I started her on all sorts of subjects, the better to be able to judge of her. And anon we fell upon the chapter of prisoners. So I said, "Mademoiselle, if a prisoner one must be, methinks it were better to succumb to you than to many another whom I have seen : better to fall into your hands than into those of the English." To this she replied, looking on me, "Methinks, even now, to see the captive I would care to take." I then asked her, "Supposing she had taken him ; would she be too hard upon him ; would she make his bondage too cruel to him ?" "Indeed, no," said she, "I would do nothing of the sort ; I would treat him as kindly as I do my own body." Then said I, "he is a happy man, who shall have the fortune to

fall into so noble and so gentle a captivity!" What need I say more? she had plenty of wit, and plenty to say for herself, and well too. Yet I clearly saw, by what fell from her, that she knew quite as much as she had any business to know; and, besides, she had a quick and a rolling eye. And lots of talk we had together. And at last, when it came to parting, she let me see that she was ready enough, for she begged me, three or four times over, to manage to come and see her, one way or another. And she was as familiar with me, and I with her, as if we had known each other all our days. And the young lady well knew the errand that had brought us to the house. And as soon as we had left, my lord, my father, said to me, "Well, what do you think of her, now that you have seen her? you may speak your mind." So I answered and said, "My lord, she certainly appears to me to be good, and good-looking, but, with your permission, she shall never be anything more to me than she now is." And then I told him everything which had occurred to me, touching herself, her manners and her eagerness. And so I did not have her; and this, from her too much lightness, and the too much readiness that I thought to see in her. And, for which escape, I thanked God many a time since; for hardly a year and a half went over, till she got herself into trouble, but whether with reason, or without reason, I do not know. And since she died. And from this, you see, my lovely daughters and my noble maids, how all gentlewomen of condition ought to be of retiring manners, self-respectful, unassuming, small-talkers. They should rejoin with diffidence; nor should they be too ready to understand, or yet anxious, or allow their eyes to be seen about. For, to end the matter, no good comes of it. Many have lost their chances through too much readiness, and of whom one would have expected very other things.

CHAPTER XIV.

How the daughter of the King of Arragon lost, through her folly, the King of Spain.

This Chapter is omitted, as the moral of it is the same as that of chapter twelve. The King of Spain, disguised as an ambassador, goes himself to judge of the King of Arragon's daughters, and chooses the younger.

CHAPTER XV.

^c Here tells of those who quarrel among themselves.

FAIR girls, you are to be careful how you ever fall out with a fool, whether man or woman; or yet with hot-headed people, for it is infinitely risky work. That it is so, I will give you an example which came under my own knowledge. I was once in a castle, where were many ladies and gentlewomen; and among them was a young lady, daughter to a Knight, an exceeding worthy man. And nothing would do her but she must get into a rage, at chess, with a gentleman, hair-brained and testy as ever he could be; and, to boot, not over nice as to consideration for other people's feelings. And the quarrel had arisen out of her alleging, that he had not played fairly. And at last it waxed so hot, that she told him, he was a cuckold and an ass. And so the board was knocked over with their noise. On this I went to the lady, and said, "My dear cousin, do not allow yourself to be disturbed, this way, at anything he says; for you know that he is a man of high words, and but little burdened with brains. So I entreat of you, if it is only for the sake of your own reputation, to leave him to himself, and have nothing more to say to him." And this I said, out of kindness, and as it had been to my proper sister. But not

a bit would she mind me, but went on rating him even more injuriously than before ; telling him, that he was no better than a goose, and the like. To which he answered her, like a sot, that he was a better man than she was a woman ; and she again to it replied, yea ; very likely, too ! And, at length, things came to such a pitch between them, that he asked her, If she really was as virtuous as she pretended to be, what did she mean then by going at night into the bedrooms of the men, and kissing and hugging them, between the sheets, in the dark ? And when she thought to revenge herself on him, by telling him, he lied ; he roared out, it was no lie, for so and so had seen it with his eyes. And on hearing this, I need not tell you if many stared and were amazed, having never had before so much as a suspicion of the matter. And most said, she had shown more sense to have kept her tongue within her teeth ; and that she had whipped herself with a rod of her own plucking ; that is to say, with her own thoughtless tongue. And when he had done, she began to cry, and tell the company, that he had slandered her. Nor did matters even rest there ; for he attacked her afterwards, wherever he went, and little heeded he in whose presence ; and so hunted her and bespattered her, that he discovered things even more shameful and scandalous, and such as she could never after wipe out the memory of, do what she would. And thus she brought herself into an eternal disgrace, and all by her foolhardiness and contempt of heart. And you may see, daughters dear, from this happy example, how no woman should ever either dispute or strive with illmannered persons, be they men or be they women, or yet people that are naturally ill-tempered. But what one should do, as soon as they see them beginning to be rusty, is, to leave them to it, simply saying to them, “ Good friend, I see well you are going to be noisy and troublesome ; so you must allow me to resign

you the field to yourself, and be off." What is to be done, is, to get up and quit the place, as a Knight once did, that I know well, to a lady who could be as nasty and malicious as any, and who was venting her spite on the Knight before a whole roomful of company. So said the Knight to her, "Madame, you are pleased to tell us very extraordinary matters. If I remain, I suppose it is no affront. I see well you are angry, and I am sorry for it." Yet, for all that, she would not give over, but continued to taunt him more shamefully than ever. And when the Knight saw that she would neither moderate, nor yet listen to reason, do what he might, he picked up a little bit of straw, and laying it before her, told her, "Dame, if you have anything farther to communicate, you may tell it to this straw; for, for my part, I am off: it will attend, I am satisfied, to anything you may have to say." * * *

CHAPTER XVI.

Of her who ate the eel.

I WILL now give you an example, upon the chapter of wives who eat the tit-bits, in the absence of their lords. There was once a lady who kept a pye in a cage, which said pye talked of everything he saw. And it happened that the lord of the house had a great eel, which he preserved in a pond, intending to have him one day dressed, as something wonderful, when he would be entertaining great lords, his neighbours, who might be coming to see him. But the lady, who was gluttonous, said to the storekeeper, "We'll eat the eel." And, in fact, they did eat the eel. And when they had eat him, they agreed to tell their lord, that the didapper had swallowed him. And when next the lord came home, the pye began

to chant, "My lord, your lady ate the eel!" On this the lord went to the pond, and, sure enough, the eel was gone. So he returned to the house, and asked his wife, "What had become of the eel?" And when she thought to screen herself, he told her plainly, "It was not so, for the pye had seen her eat it." On this there was a terrible rumpus and ado between them. And no sooner was the lord's back turned, than the lady and the storekeeper went to the pye, and plucking all the feathers off his poll, bid him "to take that, for having told about the eel!" And so the poor pye was plumed. But from that day forward, whenever anyone came to the house with an open forehead, or pilled, the pye would assuredly tell them, "Ha, you told about the eel!" And from this most notable example, you may learn, how no gentlewoman, unknown to her lord, should ever, out of mere gulosity, treat herself to the dainty morsels; excepting always when called upon to entertain persons of quality. For this poor lady never escaped, after, to be laughed at and twitted about the eel, that the pye had blabbed of.

CHAPTER XVII.

How no woman ought to be jealous.

I WILL give you an example of what a miserable thing it is to be jealous. A gentlewoman, married to a squire, loved him so little wisely, that she was jealous of every woman she saw him speak to. And, for this, her husband often and often remonstrated with her, but all to no purpose. And, among others, she was suspicious of a lady of the vicinity, who was a woman of a high spirit. And it came, one day, that she fell foul of this lady on the chapter of her husband. On which the lady told her,

“that she was labouring under a misapprehension;” to which the other rejoined, “that she lied.” On this they set to to scratch and tear one another. And the one that was accused, laying hold on a stick, dealt the other such a cut over the nose, that she broke the bridge. So that she had her nose, which is the most becoming and prominently placed member that either man or woman is possessed of, being seated in the middle of the face, all wry and snub. And so this gentlewoman remained, all her life, a spectacle, a derision, and a show; for which her husband would often upbraid her, and tell her, that perhaps she now saw all the folly of what it was to be jealous. And so it came through this mishap, that he took no more pleasure in looking at her, nor could he love her with all that perfect affection which he had formerly done; but, contrary, began to turn himself elsewhere for what he used to find at home. And so by her silliness and her jealousy she lost as well the heart as the esteem of her lord. And this is a very happy instance, to show all good women and good ladies, how they should shut their eyes on all such goings on, and how they ought to put up with, patiently and magnanimously, all such trials, if trials they have, as did an aunt of mine, and who, many a time, bemoaned to me of all her troubles. This poor lady was the Lady de Languillier, and her lord was worth upwards of a thousand livres of rent, and lived, accordingly, in a very noble style. And the Knight was marvellous waistrel; for he never was without one or two of his mistresses under his very roof; and he would often get up, at night, from alongside his wife, and be off to these worthless women. And as often as he came back from his folly, he would always find a candle lighted, and * * * *. Nor would she ever approach any nearer to a reproof. Only, now and again, she would say to him, when they were alone, “My Lord, it is no secret to me,

what passes between you and Such an one, and Such an one. However, I give you my word, with God's assistance, that, since such is your pleasure, and there is no help for it, it shall be borne with ; nor shall I ever reproach it either to you or to them, or even appear so much as to be aware of it. For, assuredly, I should be a great fool to be destroying my peace of mind, quarrelling about any such wares, since have them you will. But, at least, my Lord, I have to entreat, that you will not depart from your accustomed kindness to me, and that I may not be called on to forfeit either your affection, or your indulgence. For the rest, I shall be, in all things, submissive to you, and I will conform myself to whatever you may please to lay upon me." And it oftentimes came, after these gentle chidings, that, out of pure compassion, he would reform, and turn to her for a good while. And thus, by persisting in her great mildness and inoffensiveness, she was enabled, at last, to win him back ; so that he no more relapsed, but repented and corrected himself. And this she had never brought about by any other course. * * * And also the husband should not be too angry with his wife, even supposing she is a little jealous of him ; for she shows by it, as well how much she takes it to heart, as also her distress lest another should have robbed her of that which, by rights, was hers, according to the ordinance of God and Holy Church. But the wisest are ever those who determine to appear to see the least. And all ought, resignedly and quietly, to put up with their vexation. And as much ought every man to do ; and seem to perceive, as little as he can, what no man can help perceiving ; for it shows a great understanding on the part of such as do. But, however, the good body who sees that her husband is a little jealous of her, if he detects in her any little familiarity which does not exactly suit him, ought to bear goodnaturedly with his misgivings, nor ever allude to

them in the presence of any. And whenever she does, if at all, judge it desirable to refer to the matter, it should be as nicely as she can, telling him, "that such affection as she well knew him to bear to her might reasonably enough be pardoned some little uneasiness; but to dispel all such imaginations, for, please God, she would take on herself the care of both their honours." And thus, by fair and gentle words, she ought to divert his mind, and dissipate his jaundiced melancholy. Whilst if she were to attempt it with high and haughty exculpations, she would only make the whole thing worse, and leave him deeper in doubt than ever. For many is the woman who is more stubborn in her lies, than is she ever in the vindication of the truth; which causes what they say to be oftentimes the more misdoubted of. And, besides, I will tell you, that the good lady, albeit it may cause her some little mortification and indignation, should not, supposing her husband to be somewhat jealous, hold him, for that, the less close in her affection. For she ought to reason and remember, that it is out of his great love to her; and how that his heart is in fear and trembling, lest that another should be possessed of that which was his, according to Holy Church; and that it was but natural he should have his eyes about, and watch that none were participator of what alone should be his; so that he never more could love her, and all the felicity of marriage would be gone. And jealousy is a thing which works the wrath of many; it parches up blood and brain alike. And so, from these examples, you may perceive how one is to set a bound as well to what they see, as what they fancy they see; resolving all to reason.



CHAPTER XVIII.

Here tells of the citizen's wife who had herself disfigured, and all through her ill-temper.

This Chapter is omitted. It tells of a woman who had her nose broken by her husband, because she persisted in contradicting him before company.

CHAPTER XIX.

Of her who jumped upon the table.

This somewhat silly tale, illustrative of the virtues of love and obedience in a wife, is passed over.

CHAPTER XX.

Of her who gave meat to dogs.

I WILL now tell you of her who provided meat, and dishes fit for the table for her little dogs. A lady once had two little dogs; and she was so enamoured of them, that she knew no greater delight than to feed them out of bowls with soup; and after, to give them flesh. And, at last, one day, a friar, scandalized at such waste, said to her, "that it was ill beseeming that dogs should be wallowing in fat and plenty, whilst God's own poor were perishing for want." And at this, his presumption, the lady was horribly angry and affronted; nor would she mend her ways a bit. However, at length, when the lady came to die, and was on her death-bed, among other miracles, they saw, as clear as day, on her bed, two little black dogs. And while yet alive, or ever the breath was out of her, they made for her mouth, and began to lick her tongue. And when it was all over, they found her

mouth, which had been licked, all black as any coal ; as I myself heard from a gentlewoman that was present, and who named me the party. * * *

Here follow some natural, sensible and pious exhortations enough on the head of charity ; as also the examples set of some few royal and noble matrons.

CHAPTER XXI.

Of the dispute between the Lord de Beaumanoir and his lady.

The conclusion of this chapter alone is given. The first part is descriptive of a pleasant tiff between the gentleman and his lady, *apropos* of the latest fashions.

* * * * *
And this, for certain, you may rely on, that those who are the first to make their appearance in any new fashion, are sure enough to find themselves laughed at, and twitted for their pains. But, praise be to God, now-a-days, as soon as ever it gets abroad that Such an one has got some unheard of sort of gown or robe, never a one of the lot of them will be an hour at peace, till they have provided themselves with the like. And, every day, they will keep harping away to their lords, "Such an one has such a thing, and it becomes her wonderfully, and it is a beautiful thing into the bargain : I do beg, my lord, that I may have one like it." And if her lord replies, "My dear, even suppose she has ; others, who are quite as much to be respected as she is, are without it ;" they will at him again with, "What ! sir, if they do not know how to dress themselves, what is that to me ? If So and so has it, it is reason sufficient that I should have it too." And, take my word for it, they will so manage to belabour him with words and arguments, that, at last, he will be forced to let them have their way. But these sort of women are never looked upon either as the safest, or the most to be

relied on; for they have their heart too much set on this world and its vanities. And from them, things have come, at length, to such a pass, that common scullion girls, the very chamber wenches and storekeepers, ape them to their faces. For they line as well their robes, as their shoes, with fur or cloth; and you may, as often as not, see them behind, all covered with mud, and filthy and draggled, as the inside of any sheep's tail.⁽¹⁾ And I neither can admit of the propriety of such new-fangled toggery, either for the one season or for the other. For, in the winter, in the frost, they are like to perish with cold on their stomachs and at their nipples, which have much more call, than have their heels, to be kept warm. And in summer, they are no better than a hotbed for the fleas; and so I do not value one fico, any such vagaries or inventions. I am not now addressing myself to ladies and gentlewomen who lead the fashion; it is for them to do precisely as they think proper. As regards such, it is not my intention, at least wilfully, to offer to them any sort of slight. It is at once my duty and my privilege to honour and to serve them, to the best of my poor ability. I make this book, with no other end, than to be serviceable to my daughters and to my female servants, towards whom I am entitled to express myself exactly as I choose, and as appears to me to be called for.

CHAPTER XXII.

Of how perilous a thing it is to meddle with men of the world; and of the Lady who undertook to cross-question the Marshal de Clermont.

FAIR daughters, I will give you an instance of how dangerous a thing it is to meddle with men of the world, and such as are never at a loss for a reply. For, assuredly, to play practical jokes with them is a losing

game. There was once a famous feast, where were many great lords and ladies, and, among others, the Marshal de Clermont; than whom no man was deeper versed in the ways of the world; a weightier or a readier speaker, or could show himself to more advantage in the presence of lords and ladies. And there was also there a certain great lady, who said to him before them all, "Clermont, to give you my mind, you have much to thank God for; you are, beyond a doubt, a gallant Knight, and good-looking to boot; and of parts, to admiration: and so, you would be all but perfection, were it not for that cantankerous and ill-natured tongue of yours, which never will be quiet." "And, Madame, may I ask," said he, "is this the worst you have to tell of me?" "I will allow it is," said she. "Now," said he, "just let us look quietly at this matter. Madame, it would appear to me, that is, if rightly considered, that I have not so malicious a tongue as yourself; and I will tell you why. You have spoken of me, and reproached me with the worst that you know of me; whilst I, the worst that I know of you, I have kept to myself. So, Madame, what injury have I done you? I am not, you see, so ready with my tongue as you are." And, when the lady heard this, she wished that she had held her peace, nor striven with such a man; and this, for reasons which I need not mention, but which were enough commented on. And it is an old saying, that, as too much impetuosity knows no discretion, so it is advisable to hold one's tongue in time. And this is an excellent example. For it is better, for the most part, to keep still, and to carry one's self forbearingly, than to be too ready to pick a quarrel with those who have their answer on their tongue's tip, and will not stick to allow more to be gathered, than they care to express. And, from all this, look well who it is you are about to speak to, and in no way incense them; for the strife of such is wondrous perilous.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Here tells of Bouciquaut and of three ladies; and of how he settled with them.

WHEN on this head, I will farther tell you what passed once between Bouciquaut and the three ladies who had made up their minds, that they would be too much for him; and how he brought them to their senses. Above all the Knights of his time, Bouciquaut was a subtle and a fluent speaker; and no man had a profounder knowledge of the world, or wore a more commanding presence when in the company of noble lords and ladies. And it one time came, that at an entertainment, three great ladies were sitting on a counter, chatting together of all their lucky fortunes. And, at length, one of them said to the others, "Fair Cousins, ill luck to her, the one of us, who will not out with it—has she, or has she not, this year, been entreated of any, *par amour*?" "Faith, then," said the second, "I have, and within the year." "And I also," said the third. "And so was I," said the first. Then said the most gamesome of the three, "Ill luck to her, the one of us, who will not freely tell of who it was she was prayed *par amour*. If the rest will out with theirs, I will with mine." And to this they all agreed. Then said the first, "It was Bouciquaut who made love to me." "Truth?" said the second, "why it was he who did the same to me!" And, said the third, "So was it to me!" Then said they all, "And is this the loyal Knight we took him for? He is no better than a farcer, and a base deceiver. He is in the next room; let us send for him, and we will cast it in his teeth, to his face." So they sent for him, and when he was come, he inquired of them, "What it was they wanted with him?" "We want to speak to you," said they; "sit down

there ;" and they thought to make him sit down at their feet. Instead of which, he said to them ; " No, ladies ; since it is at your commandment that I have come, you may have the civility to send for a stool or a chair ; for if I stoop, I might be bursting my braces, and you putting it abroad, that it was something else went wrong." So they consented, at last, that he was to have a chair. And as soon as he was seated, and they, by this, in a towering rage, one of them commences, " How is this, Bouciquaut, you have been imposing on us all this time ? we always fancied that you were a constant and a faithful Knight ; but you are no better than an impostor and a traitor to the sex ; and you are a disgrace to your own !" " How, Madame," said he, " what is it I have done ?" " What have you done ! You have made love to Fair Cousins, here present ; and so have you to me ; and you have sworn to every one of the three of us, that you loved us above all the world. And it was nothing of the sort ; it was all a lie. If you were three, it might be ; but no man can have three hearts, to love three women at once. And in this you have shown yourself false and malicious, and your name should be blotted for ever from the scroll of loyal and of secret Knights." And when they had done, he said, " Ladies, I suppose I have heard all ? You are entirely in the wrong, and I will tell you why. For all the while I said as much to each of you, it was but to amuse myself ; another thought was not in my head. And, besides, you should be the last to reproach me with levity or trifling, seeing the confidences you have, the lot of you, been making to one another." And when they saw that he was not one whit taken back, one of them began to say to the rest, " I will tell you what we will do ; we will draw lots for him, and see which is to have him." " Faith," said the second, " for my part, he may go without drawing. I make over to the others my chances of him." " And so

do I," said the third. On hearing this, he said to them, "Axe of God; ladies, I would have you to know, Bouciquaut is neither to be had, nor to be not had, at any such game! There is not one of you shall have him." And with this he got up and quitted them, leaving them in as much confusion as they had thought to have left him. * * *

CHAPTER XXIV.

Of three ladies who accused a Knight.

IT once came that three ladies had accused a Knight, in a like manner, and of a similar deception. And they had got him in a room by himself; and each lady had a gentlewoman with her. And they had deliberately tried him, and condemned him to death, so that he should never again be guilty of any such perfidy. And they were, all six, in such a state of fury and exasperation, that their knives were already drawn to despatch him; nor would they hearken to prayer or exculpation. So, seeing this, he said to them, "My ladies and gentlewomen, since, by your ordinance, I am adjudged to die, beyond a hope of pardon or reprieve; all I have to entreat of you is, that you will grant me one little favour." And, at last, they agreed that he should have it." Then, said he, "Are you aware of what it is you have been promising me?" "No," said they, "how can we be till you have told us?" Then said he, "My boon is, that the biggest wh—e of the lot of you will be pleased to strike the first blow." And when they heard this, they were all confounded and taken back, reasoning, each one, with themselves, If I strike first, it is as much as acknowledging myself to be what he says. And when he saw them all in this dilemma, and, as it were, staggered, he jumped up upon his legs,

and made for the door, and unbolted it, and got off. And so the Knight saved himself, to the discomfiture and amazement of the ladies. And from this you see, of what avail a little presence of mind may be to man or woman. And now I will say no more on this head, but return to such as have their hearts too much set on this world, its feastings and its tournaments; and who have a way of going on pilgrimages, not so much out of devotion, as for their entertainment.

CHAPTER XXV.

Of those who delight to go on pilgrimages and to tournaments.

I WILL give you an instance of a good lady, who, without any real cause, fell into disgrace, at the round table of a tournament. This good lady was young, and her heart was set upon the world. And gladly would she dance and sing, so that she was the delight of all the lords and knights, and good fellows generally. And she liked all this well, and her lord gave her plenty of liberty, and everybody access to her. And though this was much against the grain, yet he did it for fear of falling into the ill graces of his neighbours, or that it should be said of him, that he was jealous. So he gave her full permission to be one of all fêtes and meetings; and no expense was spared to send her off suitably equipped, and as became the honoured guest of her entertainers. But she could very easily see, that, had it solely depended on him, her time had been spent at home. And as it is not unusual, in the summer season, that dancing should be kept up till light; it happened, once upon a time, at an assembly where she was, that the torches were suddenly quenched, so that all was hubbub and confusion. And as soon as fresh ones were brought, the brother of this lady's lord

found her in the grip of a gentleman, who had drawn her a little on one side. Though, in good faith, I firmly believe there was neither any villany, nor anything wrong going on. However, the brother said that there was; and talked of it about, till at length it got to the ears of her lord, who was so wounded with it, that, never after, had he any confidence in her. Nor did he ever again find joy or solace in her sight, as beforetime. So that they became like cat and dog; as people bereft of their wits. And all their house and all their substance went to wrack and ruin; and the whole through this miserable beginning.

I knew well another fair lady, who also delighted in being taken to fêtes. She, too, got herself into trouble and disgrace about a great lord. So much so, that she took to her bed, and there lay so long, that there was nothing left of her but skin and bone, so gone was she as that.⁽²⁾ And when she was, as she thought, at the point of death, she sent for her friends, and my lord, Sir God. And when they were come, she said, before them all, "My lords and ladies, good friends all; see to what I am come! You know, all of you, how once I was young and fair, and plump and ruddy; and the world allowed that I was handsome. See now, how much of all this is left. Fêtes I loved to haunt; tilts and tournaments; but all that is now past; I have to return to that dust out of which I came. And you also know, dear friends and hearts, how much villany there has been talked touching the matter of me and of my Lord de Craon. But by that God whom I am about to receive, and on the damnation of my soul, I say it; he never asked ought of me, nor did he more meddle with me than did my own father that begot me. I will not deny but what he slept with me, but nothing ever passed between us, either in thought or in deed." And though many were taken back on hearing

this, who had imagined clean contrary; yet, nevertheless, the stain stuck to her, and was ever remembered to her disadvantage. And from this you may see, how ticklish it is for honest women to have their hearts too much abroad upon the world; and how little call they have to be present at feastings and revels, when they can civilly excuse themselves. For they are places where, without any sort of provocation, many a worthy woman gets a hurt. I would not, by this, mean to say, that it is not allowable, at times, to stretch a point, at the requirement of your parents or friends, and to go. But, my dear daughters, if you cannot decently decline, and do go, have a care, when night comes, and the dancing and the singing, as well for the actual danger, as for the fear of envious tongues, to be always by the side of some of your own people or parents. So that if the lights come to be put out, they may be at hand; not so much that they should be afraid to trust you, as to screen you from the scandal of malicious tongues and eyes, which seldom fail to talk and to espy a great deal more than ever takes place. And thus you will more effectually guard your reputations against the assaults of the unscrupulous; whose delight it ever is to noise the evil and to hide the good.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Of those who, on feast days, decline to wear their best clothes.

This Chapter tells us of a lady, who, for seven years, was swollen up to the size of a tub; and all because she had refused to put on her best toggery on a feast day. It was on the feast of *Our Lady*, and a Sunday besides. On her waiting woman's remonstrating with her, "Surely, Madame, you are going to have on your best robe? it is the feast of our Lady, and Sunday, too!" she replies, "What, sure you know there will not be a soul there but the peasants!"—"Ah, Madame," said the gentlewoman, "but God and his mother are the greatest of the great; and they are to be there, and to be honoured

above all earthly lords;" &c. * *. "Hold your nonsense," said the lady, "God and the priests see me every day; but people of condition do not see me every day; and so it is but reasonable that I should show them more respect, and dress myself accordingly." "Madame," said the woman, "you are in the wrong,"—"I am not," said the lady; "at any rate, I will take my chance." And even as she was speaking, there came a great blast, hot as any furnace, and blew her up, like a firkin, to such a dimension that she had to be lifted; being no more able to stir about than any stone, &c. The poor inflated lady tells us, after, in her deep contrition, how, "when-ever she overheard the companions whispering, so that she should hear,—“Hey, what a bust of a woman! is not she the one to destroy a good Knight's peace of mind?" her very heart would bound within her, &c.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Of the Sister of St. Bernard.

This elegant lady venturing, in all her finery, into the presence of her ascetic of a brother, he turns his back on her. On this, she sends to him to ascertain the cause of his displeasure. Discovering that it was her bravery, she doffs it, and trusting herself a second time with him, he addresses her thus: "Good sister, if I love your person, much more ought I then your soul. Surely you must see that it is displeasing to God and to his angels to find all this trumpery, and all this pride and extravagance spent upon the tricking out of a wretched carrion, that, six days after the breath is out of it, would stink so that one could not so much as approach it, let alone look on it, without a loathing and an horror. Sister dear, do pray think, if it be but once in the day, how many are the poor who are perishing of nakedness and of want around you; and that with but the tenth part of what you expend on your trimmings and your person, forty miserables had been covered and been fed," &c. * * *

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Of those who lark and titter in Church.

This foolish old wife's, or rather, monk's tale, is passed over.

CHAPTER XXIX.

An example that once occurred at mass, at Saint Martin's.

This Chapter is omitted, out of the same considerations that the last was.

CHAPTER XXX.

Of her who became deaf at mass.

This Chapter is omitted, out of the same considerations with the last.

CHAPTER XXXI.

Of the Lady who took a quarter of a day to dress herself.

THERE was once a lady, whose domicile was hard upon the church. But she invariably took such a time to dress and ready herself, that she had put all the clerks, the priests, and the parish quite out of patience with her. And so it happened, one Sunday, when she was later than usual, and after everybody had got tired of saying, "She will be here presently;" that, at length, they got to wondering, "Was anything the matter?" And as half the day was already gone, they began to be savage and sick of waiting. So one begins to say, "What! will Madame never have done combing and tricking herself out?" and another, "God send her an ugly looking-glass, for keeping us, this way, for ever loitering and fooling about!" And even as he spoke, so it pleased God to do, and to make an example of her.⁽³⁾ For, at that very moment, as she was looking in the glass, she saw, in the reflection of another which the enemy was holding behind her, * * *, so ugly and staring, that the poor lady went out of her wits, as one demoniac, and for a long time was ill. But

since, God sent her health ; and, by this, so corrected her, that, ever after, she managed to do with less time to dress ; humbly thanking him for the lesson which he had taught her. And from this excellent example you may learn how wrong it is to waste time, yourselves, upon such exercises, or yet to cause others to waste their ; especially at the hours of divine service.

CHAPTER XXXII.

Of her whose delight it was to hear mass.

This foolish story is omitted.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

Of the Countess who, every day, would hear three masses.

This Chapter is omitted, for the same reason that the last was.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Of women who delight to go on pilgrimages.

This tedious, half allegorical, sermon is passed over.

CHAPTER XXXV.

Of those who committed misdemeanours in a church.

Anything to equal the credulity, the simplicity, the richness, the naïveté of this and the following Chapter, I seldom recollect to have encountered. In them, our Knight has completely outdone himself. He gives us the names of the parties, churches, &c. The latter mishap, he alleges to have occurred in Poitou, but three years before.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

Of a monk who committed misdemeanours in a church.

This Chapter is passed over for the same reason that the last was.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

Of the evil examples of the world.

This Chapter, merely consisting of some few sensible enough, though somewhat prosy, observations, is omitted.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

Of the good examples of the world.

This Chapter is passed over, for the same reason that the last was. It is the prologue to a long catalogue of scriptural illustrations.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

Of Eve, our first mother.

A portion of this Chapter is given, in order to enable the reader to form a sort of general idea as to the character of a whole succession of chapters, which it would be infinitely tedious for him to peruse.

The earliest instance of sin and of wretchedness, and by which death came into the world, originated with Eve, our first mother; who miserably disregarded the commandment of God, and made, as it were nothing of all the honour he had purposed for her.⁽⁴⁾ For he had made her Lady of all things living, beneath the sun, and enjoined all creatures to obey and conform themselves to her will. And had she not fallen, through her disobedience, into sin, there was neither fish in the sea, nor bird of the air, nor beast of the field, that was not at her disposal; to break, or to mould to her pleasure, without a murmur or

contradiction. And, besides, in childbirth she had neither travail nor suffering ; nor did she ever know heat or cold, or toil or sadness, or death or sickness. No water could drown her, nor fire burn her : no knife nor other weapon wound her. None could hurt her, or so much as distress her. Now, I pray you, just ponder and observe, how one sin was sufficient to precipitate her from so much honour and felicity into such an abyss, and such a bondage. For she forfeited both her wealth and her prosperity ; and was deprived of all her glory and the privilege of obedience, through her disobedience. So see, my dear girls, in what the first woman fell, so that you may be preserved, with God's assistance, by the good examples which I will lay before you. And I tell you, that the first sin of our first parent came through keeping bad company. For she fell into conversation with the serpent, which had, according to the Scripture, the face of a woman, surpassing beautiful and meek-like. And she allowed him to proceed privily and unopposed, which was sottish, for he only spoke submissively and cunningly, the better to deceive her. And if, at the outset, she had declined to listen to him, and returned to her husband, she had discomfited him, to his shame and to his face. And so her foolish hearkening was the ruin of her. And from this, fair daughters, see how little desirable it is to give ear to those who have an oily tongue, and possess the art of saying smooth things ; for it often comes that they are traitrous and venomous ; and, too likely, will bring you into trouble. * * *



CHAPTER XL.

The third fault of Eve.
This Chapter is omitted.



CHAPTER XLI.

Of the fourth folly of Eve.
This Chapter is omitted.



CHAPTER XLII.

Of the fifth folly of Eve.
This Chapter is omitted.



CHAPTER XLIII.

Of the sixth folly of Eve.
This Chapter is omitted.



CHAPTER XLIV.

Of the seventh folly of Eve.
This Chapter is omitted.



CHAPTER XLV.

Of the eighth folly of Eve.
This Chapter is omitted.



CHAPTER XLVI.

The ninth folly of Eve.
This Chapter is omitted.

CHAPTER XLVII.

Of a bishop who preached upon new-fangled fashions.

This good bishop, preaching before a large assemblage of ladies, at a time when head dresses, *à la stag*, were all the fashion, gives them to understand, among other censures, "that their head-pieces were, for all the world, like the frontlets of a stag; that they had to lower their heads on coming into God's house, just as a deer does in passing under the arms of an oak. I doubt much but the devil is in, astride, among the branches, &c." And he stuck to tell them nothing that he thought of them, or yet of their pins, or their hoods; so that they were all confused and humiliated, and hung down their heads for very shame, knowing well that he saw through them, and was making game of them for their folly. And not a few of them have since abandoned all their branches and horns, and brought themselves within some sort of reason. For he told them, "that all such conceits, and novelties, and inventions, were no better than so many snares set by the devil; just as the spider spins his meshes for the flies," &c.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

Of those that stick in the mud.

The moral of this Chapter being, *The longest way round, is the shortest way there*; it is omitted.

CHAPTER XLIX.

Here tells, how one should keep the middle state.

This Chapter insisting upon the folly, wickedness, and bad taste of being the first to adopt any new fashion; our Knight proceeds, "On this head I will give you an account of a prodigy that a good lady told me of, this very year, one thousand, three hundred and lxxij. She told me, that she, with a large party of ladies, went to an assembly on the occasion of the feast of St. Margaret. And there was an immense crowd there. And among the number was a gentlewoman, surpassing good-looking, and attractive in the extreme. But she was dressed in a different manner from any of the rest; and had on her head such a steeple of a hood, that all the company came

flocking about her, as if it had been some monstrous beast. For her head-dress was different from anybody else's, and it was for this that they stared at her. So the good lady said to her, "Sweetheart, might I ask is there any particular name for that kind of hood?"—"Oh, yes," said the other, "they call it, *The Gibbet!*" "The gibbet!" returned the lady; "'fore God, your name is an odd one, nor is the thing itself of the pleasantest to have suspended above one's ears." And so it went all up and down the country, that this lady had christened her hood, "*the hood à la Gibbet*;" and everybody was making themselves merry at her expense, and coming to have a sight of it, just as little children would of a puppet-show.⁽⁶⁾ And I remember asking the good lady, what sort of a looking thing it was; and she described it to me. But, to tell you the truth, I have forgotten almost everything about it. I fancy, however, she said that it was propped up with great silver pins, as long as one's finger, and wire; so that, for all the world, it looked like a gallows, &c. * *

CHAPTER L.

Of a Knight that had iij. wives.

FAIR daughters, I should greatly like you to know, and carry in your memories, the story of a Knight that had three wives. And this Knight was a most worthy man, and of an unblemished reputation; and he had an uncle, an hermit; an holy person and of a religious life. And this Knight had a first wife, whom he most passionately loved. But at last it came, that death, who takes all, took her; at which the Knight was so horribly cut up, that he had like to die of sorrow and vexation. And he could think of no other way to distract himself, save by going to see his uncle, the hermit, whom he well knew to be an holy man. So he went to him, weeping and bemoaning, and lamenting to him his wife; on which the good hermit comforted him as well as he was able. And at last the Knight entreated of him, with clasped hands, for God's sake, to find out for him, were she lost or were she saved. Then the holy man, taking compassion on his nephew, went to the chapel and fell on his knees,

imploring of God to be pleased to show him where she then was. And when he had remained a long time at his orisons, he at last fell asleep. And in a vision, he saw before him the poor soul, with my lord St. Michael on one side, and the enemy on the other. And into the one balance, my lord St. Michael was handing all the good deeds she had ever performed in the flesh; and into the other, the enemy, all the evil ones. And, among them, that which weighed the heaviest, and went most against her, were her robes, which were marvellous rich, and set off with choicest firs and ermine. So, seeing them, the enemy cried out, and said, "Ha, Saint Michael, Sir; this woman had ten pairs of robes, the long with the short, as over ones; and you know, as well as I do, that the half of them had been as much as she had any call for; that is, one long one and two short ones, and two for out of doors. This had been quite enough for any rational woman; and even less than that had been sufficient, had she taken her gospel at the letter. She had no business with the half of them. One of her robes alone had purchased l. coats of freize for l. half-clad wretches, who were starving at her very gate, yet she never once looked to them." Then the enemy took the robes, as she had left them, and threw them into the scale, and the rings and the trinkets that the companions had given her, who had been sweet upon her, on a time, upon the top of them; with all the spiteful and malicious tales she had sown up and down; robbing the innocent of their reputations; for she had been unconscionably envious and ill-natured. Nor was there anything of the kind, which she had ever done, that was not fetched, and all was thrown, with the clothes, into the balance; so that the evil much outweighed the good, and the enemy carried the day. Then he took her and smothered her up in all her finery and set fire to the heap; so that the poor soul began to yell and howl most piteously. Then the hermit awoke,

and told all he had seen to his nephew ; and desired that all the robes should be distributed, for the honour of God, and among the poor.

CHAPTER LI.

Of the Knight's second wife.

This Chapter the reader may as well read to him or herself.

AND after this, the Knight remarried ; and his wife lived v. years, and then died. And the Knight, if he was distressed at the loss of his first wife, was as much, or even more, to lose the second. So he came to his uncle, all broken and disconsolate, and begging of him, as he had done the preceding time, to discover for him what had become of his wife. So, out of pure pity, the good man fell again to his prayers. And then was it revealed and shown plainly to him, that she was to be saved ; but that it was only to be after c. years of the fire of purgatory, for certain offences which she had committed toward her lord ; which were, that she had trespassed with a squire, with some few other of the lighter sort of indiscretions. However, as she had invariably confessed them, because she had done so, fully, she was not damned. So the holy man told the Knight, that she was saved, at which he was enchanted. Now just reflect, how, for one single crime, she got all this fire. But it is easily to be accounted for, if, as the holy man alleged, they had repeated this offence x. or xij. times ; for, for each such transgression, there is vij. years of the flames of purgatory, independent of confession. For the vij. years of fire is only to purge and purify the soul from each such false and mistaken delight. And though she had neither offended with a married man, nor yet a priest, nor a monk, nor yet engendered offspring, nevertheless, for this mortal sin, each time that it was

indulged in, she had vij. years of purgatory, in spite of her admission. So, lovely girls, you see at how dear a price so brief a pleasure is bought, &c. * * *

CHAPTER LII.

Of the Knight's third wife.

This Chapter is omitted, as tedious.

CHAPTER LIII.

Of a Princess.

* * *

* * * Wherefore, daughters fair, I have to entreat of you, that you will attend to this example, and engraft it in your hearts; and that you will never make more of your faces, which God has fashioned after his own image, than he himself has made of them. You are neither to shave your eyebrows, nor yet your foreheads; nor are you ever to put anything save lye upon your hair. For you will find, hanging in the church of Our Lady de Rochedamour, the tresses of more than one lady, who, by divine ordinance, could never get into the church till such time as they had cut them off; and all this through having washed their heads with wine, and other preparations than simple lye. And this marvel is true and authenticated. * * *

CHAPTER LIV.

Of Lot's wife.

This Chapter is omitted.

CHAPTER LV.

Of Lot's daughters.

This Chapter is omitted.

—♦—

CHAPTER LVI.

Of Jacob's daughter.

This Chapter is omitted.

—♦—

CHAPTER LVII.

Of Thamar, wife to Honain.

This Chapter is omitted.

—♦—

CHAPTER LVIII.

Here speaks of King Pharaoh ; and of Joseph, the son of Jacob.

This Chapter is omitted.

—♦—

CHAPTER LIX.

Here speaks of Moab's daughters.

This Chapter is omitted.

—♦—

CHAPTER LX.

Here speaks of Madiam's daughter.

This Chapter is omitted.

CHAPTER LXI.

Of Thamar, King David's daughter.

The Knight here takes occasion to warn them, how, "by this example, no woman who is determined to preserve untarnished her purity, her honour, and her dignity, should ever trust herself alone with any man, be he who he might; saving only her lord, or her father, or her son; inasmuch as many a misery and temptation has come of the contrary. And if I thought it but proper, I could tell you of numbers of whom it is firmly believed that they have been overtaken and fallen, and with their own nearest relatives, &c."

CHAPTER LXII.

Of a good man who was a ropemaker.

Among other pleasant tricks played on this good man by his wife, and for which he afterwards indulged himself in the satisfaction of smashing her limbs with a pestle, is the following:—

* * * * *

ANOTHER time, when he thought to take his pocket, which was at the foot of the bed, as he was about to leave for market, iij. leagues off, he took instead the prior's drawers, and rammed them into his sack. And when he got to the place, and put his hand into the sack to pull out the pocket, in their place he found the drawers; at the apparition of which, he was horribly amazed and hurt. Whilst, on the other hand, the prior, who had been hid all the time between the bed and the wall, when he went to put on his drawers, could not find any drawers to put; but only the pocket which had been left by mistake. So he at once divined that it was the husband had taken and carried them off. On this the wife was at her wits' end; so off she went to a neighbour gossip, and told her all her mishap, begging of her, for God's sake, to get her out of the scrape.⁽⁶⁾ So the gossip said to

her, "You get drawers, and I'll get drawers, and we'll ram it down his throat that all women have drawers." And so they did. So when the good man came home, all down in the mouth, and in a fury, in steps the false gossip, who was on the watch, and coming to him, asks him, "What sort of market he had had; for," added she, "you half look as if something had gone wrong, or you had lost something." "Faith," said the good man, "it is not any loss that I have had: but there is something riles me." And at last he told her how he had found the drawers. On hearing this, she began to laugh, and said to him, "Ha, old friend, I see clearly where the mistake lies; and that you are in a fair way to be jealous, and to be making a fool of yourself: for there is not in the country round a more respectable woman than your wife, or one who reserves herself more purely or entirely to her husband. Now, the fact of it is, she and I, and a lot more of this town, took, not long ago, to wearing drawers; and it was no more than time we should. And that this is the case, look, here are mine." And then she pulled up her petticoats and showed him her drawers. And when he had looked close, and seen that she really had drawers on, he allowed he was mistaken. So, he believed her, and thus, for the second time, this unscrupulous woman saved her.

* * * * *

CHAPTER LXIII.

Here speaks of the sin of pride.

This Chapter is omitted.

CHAPTER LXIV.

Here speaks of Queen Vashti.

This Chapter is omitted.

CHAPTER LXV.

Here speaks of the wife of Aman.

This Chapter is omitted.

CHAPTER LXVI.

Here speaks of Queen Jezebel.

This Chapter is omitted.

CHAPTER LXVII.

Here speaks of Queen Atalia and of Queen Brunheust.

This Chapter is omitted.

CHAPTER LXVIII.

Here speaks of the sin of envy.

This Chapter is omitted.

CHAPTER LXIX.

Here speaks of one of the wives of Acharia.

This Chapter is omitted.

CHAPTER LXX.

Here speaks of covetousness.

This Chapter is omitted.

CHAPTER LXXI.

Here speaks of wrath.

This Chapter is omitted.

CHAPTER LXXII.

Here speaks of a wife who would not come at the command
of her lord.

I WOULD like you to know the case and example of the lady who would not condescend to come to dinner; no matter for what her lord could say; so self-willed and ridiculous was she, and all for a little or nothing. And when her lord saw that, do what he might, she was determined not to come, he sent for the porter, who was a mortal ugly and horrible-looking fellow; and he had a cloth fetched from the kitchen, and a table placed before her, and on it this common cloth; and he bid the porter to be seated at it. And then, coming to her, he said to her, "Dame, since you will neither attend to my commandment, nor yet eat in my company, I leave you to that of this porter, and make over to you the use of this table." And at this she became even more incensed than she had been before. But presently, when she plainly saw that he was making game of her, she came to her senses, and allowed to all her folly. And from this you may see that no woman ought ever to thwart, or refuse to obey the ordinance of her lord; that is, if she is either desirous to be mistress of his affections, or to have peace and understanding in the house. For, for very evident reasons, submission should begin on her part.

CHAPTER LXXIII.

Here speaks of flattery.

This Chapter is omitted; though, indeed, it contains one or two pleasant instances enough of the wholesomeness of that panacea.

CHAPTER LXXIV.

Here speaks of discovering the matters of one's lord.

* * * * *

I SHOULD like you to know the story of the Knight who essayed his wife, whom he saw to be but young. So he said to her, "My life, I am going to tell you a most extraordinary thing; but, for the soul of you, do not breathe it to mortal living—I laid two eggs. Now, for God's sake, do not mention it." And she promised him, on her honour, that she would not. But instead of this, she thought the time would never soon enough come, that she could be away, and get to one of her gossips. And when, at the length, she had got to her, she began, half out of breath, "Ha, my dearest friend, I will tell you something, but it is to be a terrible secret, and it is not to go beyond us two." On this, the other assured her that it should not." Then said she, "May God forgive me, if a most horrible thing has not happened at our place: for it is as true as I live, my lord has laid three eggs!" "Holy Mary!" cried the other, "laid three eggs; how can that be? Why, it is the most awful thing I ever heard of!" So, as quick as her legs would carry her, she was off, and told to another how So-and-so had lain four eggs. And this last told a third, that five eggs had been laid of one man. And so the two eggs came to be an hundred. And all the country was ringing with it; so that, at last, it come back to the ears of the lord. On this he sent for his wife, with a number of her family and friends. And when they were all come, he said to her, "Madame, enough has been made of what I told you, between ourselves. Praise be to God, the two eggs I laid have now become an hundred! You have told what I desired you not." On hearing this, she had not a word to say.

for herself; but stood, looking like a fool in the midst of them. And, from this example, learn, how no honest woman should divulge the secrets of her lord.

CHAPTER LXXV.

Here speaks of disdain.

This Chapter is omitted.

CHAPTER LXXVI.

Here speaks of putting on one's clothes before men.

The Knight here tells his daughters of all the trouble poor David got himself into through Bathsheba's thoughtlessness; and concludes by warning them, "that every woman ought religiously to conceal herself when dressing and washing. And that she should neither out of vanity, nor yet to attract attention, show either her hair, or her neck, or her breast, or any part which ought to be covered."

CHAPTER LXXVII.

Here speaks of making foolish requests.

This Chapter is omitted.

CHAPTER LXXVIII.

Here speaks of treason.

This Chapter is omitted.

CHAPTER LXXIX.

Here speaks of rapine,

This Chapter is omitted.

CHAPTER LXXX.

Here speaks of patience.

This Chapter is omitted.

CHAPTER LXXXI.

Here speaks of leaving one's lord.

This Chapter is omitted.

Here ceases to speak of wicked women, and speaks of good, and of their carriage; and how Holy Scripture praises them.

CHAPTER LXXXII.

And first of Sarah, the wife of Abraham.

This Chapter is omitted.

CHAPTER LXXXIII.

Here speaks of Rebecca.

This Chapter is omitted.

CHAPTER LXXXIV.

Here speaks of Alia, Jacob's first wife.

This Chapter is omitted.

CHAPTER LXXXV.

Here speaks of Rachel, Jacob's second wife.

This Chapter is omitted.

CHAPTER LXXXVI.

Here speaks of the Queen of Cypress.

This Chapter is omitted.

CHAPTER LXXXVII.

Here speaks of charity.

This Chapter is omitted.

CHAPTER LXXXVIII.

Here speaks of the good lady, of Jericho, named Raab.

This Chapter is omitted.

CHAPTER LXXXIX.

Of abstinence.

* * * *

Wherefore, my dear girls, have a heed of this filthy vice of eating and drinking to excess. Never eat but at stated hours ; at dinner and at supper-time. To eat once a day is the life of an angel ; twice is all that is called for, for man or woman : oftener than this is but to be tolerated in a beast. Everything hinges upon practice and usage. For, to whatever habit of life you accustom yourself in your youth, the same will come pleasant to you in your after-days. And, for this reason, you must commence, betimes, to be abstemious.

CHAPTER XC.

To learn wisdom and righteousness.

This Chapter is omitted.

CHAPTER XCI.

Of the Lady, named Ruth.

This Chapter is omitted.

CHAPTER XCII.

That every woman ought to support her lord.

This Chapter is omitted.

CHAPTER XCIII.

On soothing the anger of one's lord.

This Chapter is omitted.

CHAPTER XCIV.

Of seeking counsel.

This Chapter is omitted.

CHAPTER XCV.

Of a good woman that loved the angels of God.

This Chapter is omitted.

CHAPTER XCVI.

Of Sarah, the wife of little Tobit.

This Chapter is omitted.

CHAPTER XCVII.

Of Queen Esther.

This Chapter is omitted.

CHAPTER XCVIII.

Of Susan, the wife of Joachim.

This Chapter is omitted.

CHAPTER XCIX.

Of Elizabeth, the mother of St. John the Baptist.

This Chapter is omitted.

Here commences to speak of the examples from the New Testament, since God came from the bowels of the Virgin Mary.

CHAPTER C.

And first, of the Magdeleine.

This Chapter is omitted.

CHAPTER CI.

Of ij. ladies who were kind toward the unbelievers.

This Chapter is omitted.

CHAPTER CII.

Here speaks of Saint Martha, sister to the Magdeleine.

This Chapter is omitted.

CHAPTER CIII.

Here speaks of the good ladies who wept after Our Lord, as he was carrying the Cross.

This Chapter is omitted.

CHAPTER CIV.

Of the sin of anger.

This Chapter is omitted.

CHAPTER CV.

How all women ought to come to their friends, exactly in the state that they may happen to be.

I WILL give you an instance on this head. There was once a Knight, a most worthy and an excellent man, and he used often to be away on voyages beyond the sea. And he had ij. nieces whom he had brought up and married; and he loved them both most tenderly. And when he was in some strange country, he had bought for each of them a fine gown and feathers for their hair. And as soon as he was back, he went to call on one of them. And when he got to the house, he began to whoop and holloa out for his niece; roaring about the place, that he was come! But instead of her hurrying down, she locked herself up in her room to clean her things and make herself fine; sending him word, that she would be with him anon. On this the Knight waited some little while, till, at last, he got angry and began asking the servants, "Was his niece ever to come?" But they still kept telling him, that she would soon be ready, and not to be impatient; at which the Knight was justly hurt and offended, seeing what a time it was since they had met. So, without more ado, he got on his horse, and left her to it, without so much as seeing her at all. And from thence he went to the house of the other niece. And as soon as he began to holloa, and his niece had made out that it was her uncle, who had been so long away; just as she was, with her hands and arms one pickle of paste, (for she had been amusing herself in the kitchen), she rushed out to him, and holding out her arms to show him, said to him, "My dearest, dearest lord and uncle, you see, as you found me, I have come to you. You must forgive me; but really nothing could keep me a moment from you." And

when the Knight saw all her attachment, he was enchanted; and he took to her, and ever after loved her much more than he did the other. And he gave her the robe which he had intended for her sister, as well as the one for herself. * * * And when she had conducted him to his apartment, exactly as she was, she took her leave of him, telling him, "My lord and uncle, I am now going to dress myself, so that I may be enabled more becomingly to wait upon you. * * *

CHAPTER CVI.

Here speaks of pity.
This Chapter is omitted.

CHAPTER CVII.

Of the iij. Marys.
This Chapter is omitted.

CHAPTER CVIII.

Here speaks of the wise.
This Chapter is omitted.

CHAPTER CIX.

Here speaks of Our Lady.
This Chapter is omitted.

CHAPTER CX.

Of the humility of Our Lady.
This Chapter is omitted.

CHAPTER CXI.

Of the pity and benignity of Our Lady.

This Chapter is omitted.

CHAPTER CXII.

Of the charity of Our Lady.

This Chapter is omitted.

CHAPTER CXIII.

Here speaks of the Queen Jehanne of France.

This Chapter is omitted.

CHAPTER CXIV.

Of sundry ladies, widows.

NEXT I will tell you of a lady, wife to a Knight-companion, who has remained a widow ever since the time of the Battle of Crecy, now xxvj. years gone. This good lady was exceeding young and taking, and she met with offers on every hand. But she never would consent to marry again, but dedicated all her leisure to the education of her children, whom she brought up with all the solicitude she could. And if she is to be admired since, she was to have been still more so in the lifetime of her lord. For he was insignificant and crooked, and had but one eye; and altogether was about as ugly a specimen as one would care to look upon; whilst she was young and beautiful, and attractive as woman well could be. Yet, for all that, this gentle lady loved him greatly, and respected him as much as it were possible for woman to do her lord; and so

feared and reverently served him, that it was the marvel of all. So this lady should be placed among the number of the good; seeing that, neither before, nor after, did she ever give occasion to any wherewith to reproach her. In addition to her, I will tell you of another lady, wife to a simple bachelor. This lady was fair, and young and lovely, and of a good family.⁽⁷⁾ And her lord was old, and in his dotage, * * * *, and had in his person some disgusting affection. Yet, for all that, the good lady attended on him more humbly, day and night, than if she had been the commonest housemaid, or scullion girl; and would put her hand to all sorts of matters, where hardly one of them could have been prevailed on, for love or money, to do the like. And they used often to be coming, and wanting to make her sing and dance at the parties which they were for ever giving in the town where she lived. But it was only occasionally that she would indulge them, and go; and nothing on earth could prevail on her to remain a moment after the hour when she knew that her lord would be likely to be in want of anything. And if any good fellow ever said to her, "Madame, why don't you stay and amuse yourself, and let the good man have his sleep: all he wants is rest;" she would understand perfectly well what it was that they meant. So she would reply to them warily, "The worse he is, the more occasion he has to be attended to," and "that she asked no other enjoyment than to be left with him, and to be permitted to contribute toward his contentment." What need I say more? she found enough, and to spare, to expatiate to her on all the joys and delights of the world that she was missing. Yet, despite it all, none could ever succeed in attaching a stain or a scandal upon her; so stout and loyal was she to her lord, and so touchy was she of her own honour. And after the death of her lord, if she had conducted herself irreproachably in his lifetime, so did she

then. And she gave all her affection to her children, nor would she consent to marriage. And so, in whatever condition she was, she was deserving of praise, and to be numbered among the worthy. And although she was but a very little lady, yet ought not her conduct and her gentleness the less to be preserved, as an ensample to her betters; nor should the good qualities of any, where meritorious, be forgotten. And now I have given you instances of the ladies of our own time; and one from every rank and state. For were I to tell you of all, it would be too much of a thing, and take up too much time; for many are the good, as well in this kingdom of France as beyond. These good ladies, of whom I speak to you, are without reproach, and have unmistakeably shown their excellence, as well in marriage, as in their widowhood, &c. * * *

But oftentimes they (*the great ladies*) have cause to repent the step, but it is then too late. And, to my apprehension, it seems, that those who take their great lady (*grande dame d'honneur*), to be their wife, make of their lady their subject. And I think it is a great pity to put to bondage a being so noble and exalted as one's lady of honour, and by means of whom one may be advanced to so much respect, position, and reputation. For, as soon as ever he marries her, he becomes the lord of her who should be the lady. And although he is then the head, and is called lord; yet will he be in a perpetual terror of failing towards her, or disobeying her. But this will soon be over. And it would appear to me, that he who does so, would quietly propose to shelve himself; for all the noble enterprise, formerly to be hazarded, or undertaken in her honour, or defence, is now at an end. And this is a subject on which there is much to be said, and for various reasons. For he who has pledged a lady his

oath and fealty, to be the upholder of her honour and her position, and to the best of his ability ; and yet, after that, counsels her to lower herself, and to demean herself, contrary to the representations of her family and advisers, and all for his own purposes ; I say, such conduct would hardly seem to me to be justifiable in such an one. By it he thus puts her last who should have been first. And this is a subject which has been canvassed enough, and not without cause.

CHAPTER CXV.

Here tells of a Knight that married a great lady.

Our Knight here tells his daughters, to be sure, if ever they come to be widows, to be careful how they re-marry ; lest they, or their husbands should be *whistled at* ; which was the salutation with which the Lord de Dorval used always to make his approaches to an unlucky wight of a Knight who had espoused his great dame. This Dorval used then to explain to the Knight why it was he whistled ; giving him for his reason, that the nightingale never whistled till such time as he had given over paying his assiduities to the lady of his love.

CHAPTER CXVI.

Here speaks of a fair reputation.

* * * * *

***. And I will now tell you, how I have heard my lord, my father, and many another worthy Knight and gentleman recall, how, in their time, reputable women were respected ; and how the objected to were flouted, and separated from among them. And it is not xl. years since this custom was yet commonly in vogue ; at least, as they say. For, at that time, no woman whose reputation was under a cloud, had been so hardy as to present herself at the table with the honoured, but she had been bidden to withdraw.

I will now tell you of two good Knights of those times ; one of whom was named, Sir Raoul de Lugre, and the other, Sir Gieffroy ; and they were brothers in arms, and stout men of war ; and they were for ever travelling about upon voyages ; to tournaments or wherever it might be that honour was to be purchased.⁽⁸⁾ And they were famous, and looked up to, as were Charny, Bouciquaut, or Saintr  . And on this account, they were ever the first always to be appealed to, and their decision was abided by, as that of authorized Knights, and constituted authorities.

CHAPTER CXVII.

How one ought to attend to what is said by their elders.

AND it was their practice, if ever they saw any young fellows of condition conducting themselves in any manner which did not become them, to show them their mistake, no matter who present. And, for this reason, the young people stood in a constant dread of them. I remember well to have heard my lord, my father, tell how, once on a time, he went to a great assembly, where were no end of lords, and ladies and gentlemen. And he had just got there as they were sitting down to table, and he had on a sort of frock, something, as he said, in the German cut. And when he had paid his respects to the ladies and lords, Sir Gieffroy called him over to him, and said to him, before all the company, "Where is your viol, your instrument ? let us have a tune."—"My lord," said my father, "you mistake me ; I do not understand music."—"Indeed !" said he, "you surprise me ; for you are certainly dressed or disguised as a minstrel."⁽⁹⁾ And, to be candid with you, I have known many of your forefathers, worthy gentlemen of the house of *La Tour* ; yet I cannot recall to have seen any of them got up in such a

guise as that." Then he answered him, "My lord, since you are pleased to disapprove of it, it shall be remedied." Then he beckoned over a minstrel to him, and gave him his frock, and told him to wear it. Then he went and got another. And when he came back to the room, the good Knight said aloud, "Truly, there is no fear for this gentleman; nor will any young men or young women, that will but listen to reproof, nor be forward to contradict their seniors, ever fail to come to good." * * *. And it is a thousand pities, and a miserable folly to feel any such ingratitude towards them; for every right-minded spirit, and of a generous nature, ought to be grateful to any one who would be at the pains to point out to them their errors. And if he is sensible and straightforward, he will thank him; for this is the test of a frank and an open nature, as well in young men as in young women; for never will a mean soul be thankful for anything, nor ever will it own to a kindness. I have now told you how they took in hand and disciplined the young men. You shall next hear the examples that they set before the more worthy ladies and gentlewomen of those times.

CHAPTER CXVIII.

Of the olden customs.

AT that time the country was at peace, and revels and entertainments abounded in the land. And lords, ladies, and gentlewomen, of all conditions, were in the habit of collecting at these fêtes, which were frequent and general; and with the others, came the reverend Knights of those times. But if, by any chance, it happened that a lady or gentlewoman of questionable reputation, or ill-spoken of in the world, sat herself down above a worthy lady or gentlewoman of an untouched one; even though

she were her superior in rank, or wife to a greater lord; presently, these undaunted Knights, and champions of good women's virtue, would, without any sort of ceremony, come, and taking the unsullied ones by the hand, place them above the bad ones; telling these latter, before all, "Dame, you must not consider it ill that this lady or gentlewoman takes precedence of you. For, although she may not be so nobly born, nor yet so rich as yourself, her character is an unblemished one; she is known to be of the good and chaste. As much cannot be said for you. You displease me. Respect is only to be shown to those to whom it is due; so you are not to be affronted." And, in this way, the Christian Knight spoke; putting the virtuous ladies, and of good reputation, before the others; which good ladies thanked God in their hearts for how they had kept themselves safely; for, by so doing, they had come to honour and advancement. Whilst the bad ones pulled angry faces, and hung down their heads; meeting with nothing but ridicule, slurs, and contempt. And this is an excellent example to all gentlewomen. For, by the disgrace which they saw to be the part of another, they the more feared and misgave to incur the like themselves. But, God be thanked, now-a-days, as much deference is paid to those who are ill-spoken of as to those who are well-spoken of; which is a sorry precedent to many. For they say, "Bah; do you not see that So-and-so is just as well received, and with as much worship, for all is said of her, as is Such another, whom no one has a word to say against? It is thought nothing of: everything passes." But, despite such reasoning, all this is specious and ill-considered; to say nothing of the sinfulness. For, the truth of it is, that, although in their presence they may meet with all outward attention and respect, as soon as ever their backs are turned, all the young fellows and the tittle-tattles begin to jabber, "Ay, there she goes;

look at her; she makes herself too cheap; So-and-so and she have had many a merry bout together!" And so they reckon and place her among the contemptible. And so it comes, that the same men who will pay them all possible consideration and civility to their faces, will put out their tongues at them behind their backs. But the poor fools see nothing of all this; still rejoicing in their folly, nor ever once imagining their shame or wickedness to be suspected. So, you see, the times are changed from what they used to be; and, as it would seem to me, for the worse. And it appears to me, that it would be better, plainly, to all, and before all, to tell them their follies and their faults, as they did in the good old time that I am speaking of. And I will tell you yet more; what I have heard of old Knights, who lived with Messire Gieffroy de Lugres and others; and who had ridden and travelled with them about the world; how, when in the fields, one of them would ask, "Whose castle or house is yon?" and it was told to him, "It is Such a lady's;" if the lady happened to be ill-reported of, or her honour to be doubtful; sooner than pass her door, he would go a quarter of a league out of his way. And when he got there, he would * * * ; and then he would take a piece of chalk, which he always carried in his satchel, and he would write on the gate, or the posts, A f—, A f—; and then he would set his name to it, and be off. But if, on the contrary, he chanced to be passing before the hotel of a good lady, or gentlewoman, he would make for it with all the haste that he could; and he would descend, and knock, and enter, and say, "My good lady" or "My dear friend, God continue to you the grace to be accounted as you are; for, Madame, you are greatly to be revered and respected." And, by this means, the good were kept in an holy fear and to the mark; nor daring to venture on what would hazard their honours or reputation. And,

for my part, I wish we could see those times again; for never, do I believe, were there so many deserving of blame as at this present.

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CHAPTER CXIX.

How Our Saviour commends good women.

This Chapter is omitted.

CHAPTER CXX.

Of the daughter of a Knight, who lost her chance of getting married through her nonsense.

I WILL now give you an instance of the daughter of a Knight, who lost her chance, and all through her folly, of being engaged to a Knight. And I must tell you that the lady had a number of sisters, of whom the eldest was married. And it happened that it was the second daughter that the Knight wanted; and everything had been settled as to the lands and contract; so that nothing was remaining, but that he should see her, which he had not as yet done, as to whether he would like her. And this young woman, who well knew the character of visitor she was to expect, had dressed herself out, and got herself up, with no end of taste. And that her figure might appear to more advantage, more slim, and elegant, she had nothing on her, save a frock alone, without any sort of lining; and it was thin and close fitting. And at the time it happened to be the depth of winter; piercing cold, and there was a sharp east wind blowing; and it was freezing so hard, that she, who had on but scarce the half of her usual clothing, became so thoroughly frozen up, that she was about as black, with torpor, as any coal. And matters were in this state when the Knight was ushered in, who

had come to see her. And when he had looked, and perceived her colour to be all gone, and herself half famished, and dead with the cold, he next had a look at her younger sister, who was, on the contrary, all rosy and warm, for she had plenty of heavy and thick clothing upon her, as one who had not so soon expected to be married. And so the Knight took a deliberate view of both of them. And after dinner, he called to him ij. of his parents who had come with him, and said to them, "Fair Lords, we have come to see the daughters of the lord of the house; and I know well that I can have whichever of them I would prefer, and I elect the third."—"Out, Sir!" said they, "this is ill advised. It is more honourable to take the eldest."—"My good friends," returned he, again, "I cannot really make out where the greater honour lies. You know that they have, each of them, an elder sister who is married; so they are equally her juniors. Besides, I cannot help seeing the third daughter to be better and fresher looking than the second whom you are wanting me to have; and so I intend to choose her." So they replied to him, that it was but reasonable his pleasure should be accomplished, and he was to have his way. And thus was it. And so he asked to have the third girl, and she was given to him; at which not a few were amazed, and no one more than she was who expected it the least, and had got herself up expressly, in hopes of a very different issue. And some time after, it happened that this second sister, who had lost the Knight through the great cold, which had wizened her up like a mummy; when she came to put on her clothes again, and the season had got round, turned out to be as good-looking as ever, as well as handsomer and ruddier than the other; so that the knight began to wonder how in the world it had all been. So he said to her, "Good sister, when I came to see you and your sister, you were not so wel looking as

you now are ; nor the seventh part of it. For you are now clear and rosy, but then you were black and crimped up. Your sister was then the more attractive of the two, but now you surpass her, which astonishes me." Then the married one, the wife of the Knight, answered for her, and said, "My Lord, I will tell you how it all is, and no otherwise. My sister, whom you see here, as did we all, fancied that you were coming to marry her. So, in order that she might appear to more advantage, and nice and slender, she had nothing on her but a summer frock. But as it was the dead of the winter, she was half perishing with the cold when you saw her. But I, who had no such expectations, was at no sort of trouble about myself ; but had on my usual warm clothing ; so that I looked like a toast, and comfortable all over. And ever since, I have thanked God that your choice fell on me, and blessed Him that my sister had foreborne to put on her clothes. For, I know well, had it not been for such a piece of luck, you would never had preferred me, or left her," &c.

CHAPTER CXXI.

Of Messire Fouques de Laval, who went to see his sweetheart.

M ESSIRE Fouques de Laval was an exceedingly handsome Knight, and particular about his person above all other Knights ; and no man paid more attention to his appearance or his port. And it once happened, as he himself told me, that he went to see his lady love, (*dame par amours*). And it was in winter time, and in a season of much inclemency and cold. So, when he got up in the morning, he dressed himself in a scarlet coat, all covered with braid ; and he simply took a light little cap for his hair. And he had nothing below but a shirt ; though all his suit was powdered with pearls. And he

had neither cloak, nor glove, nor muffler. And the cold and wind were horrible; and he was laced up tight in his things; so that he underwent the very agonies of martyrdom; and by the time he got there, he was all black in the face, and hoarse, and coughing and sneezing. And just after him arrived another gallant, who was also paying his attentions to the lady. But he was not so finely got up by long ways; but, on the contrary, had on good, warm, serviceable clothing. And he had a hood and a cloak, both well lined; so that he was as red as any cock, and full of life and spirits. And when the Knight had been announced, and had paid his respects to the lady, she gave him the most hearty reception in the world; a far better, as it seemed to Messire Fouques, than she did to him; and she talked much more to him. And the lady kept saying to Messire Fouques, "Get near the fire, Sir; I am afraid you are out of sorts; you look far from well." However, he told her, "It was nothing." And so the other Knight completely cut him out; and matters remained for a while in this state. Till at last, about a month after, Messire Fouques got to know, in a roundabout way, that the other was to be with the lady, on such a day, and at such an hour. So he managed to be there with him, and thus they were to have another try for the lady. But Messire Fouques took good care this time to be dressed after another manner; for he had on thick, substantial clothing, so that he appeared to be no longer the same man. And this he did to see how matters would go, and if it was really the clothes that had made the difference the last time. And, sure enough, he was the favoured one, and got much closer to her than the other did. And when he told me this, he added merrily, that love affairs should always be warmly gone about; and that he had a right to speak, for he had had some little experience on that head, &c.

CHAPTER CXXII.

Here tells of the Gauls and Gaulesses.

This Chapter is omitted.

CHAPTER CXXIII.

How no woman should too readily believe what is said to her.

* * *
* * *, and these constant women, who thus continue firm, and carefully defend themselves from the assault of malicious tongues, ought to be enrolled among the good ; even as the good Knights and Squires are extolled, who are advanced to consideration by reason of their valour and their worth. For the trials that they have gone through, and the pains which they have submitted to, in order to purchase to themselves distinction, cause them to be the more honoured and prized of the world. But I would not have you to think, that it is my intention, by my book, to bring any sort of discountenance upon legitimate attachments (*bonne amour*), or yet on those who loyally affect the same ; for great are the recompenses and the honours which come of them. But the good Lady de Villon, who was so admirable and beautiful a woman, and of whom, for her grace and her gentleness, so many Knights were enamoured ; I say she who was wonderful discreet, and wary of herself, used to tell them, that every prudent woman, purposing with herself to guard inviolably her honour, ought first to prove her admirer ; that is, whoever courts her, or pretends to be in love with her. And when, she used to say, she has tried him for vij. years, she will then have found out, whether he loved her from his heart, or only with his lips. And if from his heart, he was to embrace her, as a seal of her affection ; yet nothing beyond.

But of this good lady, I will say no more, for she was a little too hard-hearted. But we must hope that those of our time will be somewhat more merciful; and, with God's grace, they will; for vij. years is out of all conscience. And now, my lovely girls, I will leave this matter for a while; as also the Gaulesses, and I will tell you of a discussion which once took place between your mother and myself; and which originated out of her saying, that no woman ought to love *par amours*, excepting in certain cases. And I, I sustained the contrary. And out of this arose the controversy which I am about to repeat to you.

CHAPTER CXXIV.

Here speaks of the debate which passed between the Knight that made this book and his wife, touching the matter of loving *par amours*. The Knight speaks, the wife answers after.

MY dear daughters; as to loving *par amours* (*quant à amer par amours*), I will tell you the discussion which there was once between your mother and myself. What I wanted to maintain was, that any lady or gentlewoman is warranted in loving, in certain cases; as those of honourable expectation, such as hopes of marriage. For in true love, there is nothing but well-meaning, and all is above board. Where other thoughts enter, it is no longer love, but becomes designedness and wickedness. So you are to hear the great contention and debate which we had about it. I first said to your mother, "Dame, why should not ladies and gentlewomen love *par amours*? For it seems to me, that where there is sincere attachment (*bonne amours*), there can be nothing but good; and farther, that the lover is a better man, and carries himself more gaily, more nicely, better equipped; and is more solicitous to excel in arms, and in honour; and is more careful in

every way, of his conduct and his manners; and this, in order to gratify his lady. And, similarly, she is as anxious to please him, because she loves him. And I will farther tell you, that it is no mean labour of her hands, when a lady or a gentlewoman presents to the state a good Knight or a good Squire. And these are my reasons."

HERE THE LADY SPEAKS, AND REPLIES TO THE KNIGHT.

Then your mother replied to me, and said, "Sir, it is a matter of but small wonder to me, that you men should maintain, that all women are warranted in loving *par amours*. But seeing that this difference of opinion is being canvassed in the presence of our own daughters, I will support my side against you, and conscientiously, and to the best of my ability; for, from our own children, we should hide nothing. You say, as do all the other men, that all ladies and gentlewomen are the better for loving *par amours*; that it makes them pleasanter company; to have more self-respect; that they will pay more attention to their manners and appearance; and that, besides, they will be the means of making, and turning out a good Knight, or a good Squire. Such arguments savour rather of the licence, than of the convictions, of lords and companions, and in language common enough too. For those who tell them, that the emprise and the honour which they achieve was all undertaken for them, who have, in reality, made the companions what they are, and often armed them, and set them up for their voyages; with all the other fine things they will persuade them they have done for their sakes; I say, it does not cost them a twinge to swear all this. All they want is, to mystify them, and have them at their disposition. For such like protestations, or even more prodigious yet, many will not stick to make. But however much they may allege, that it is for their sakes that they do it; in solid truth, it is only for their own,

and to attract to themselves the applause of the world, and its advantages. So I have to entreat of you, my dear daughters, that, in this matter, you will give no ear to your father. And I pray of you, if you have any value for me, in order that you may guard your honours the more effectually, without spot or blame, that you never will allow yourselves to be in love (*que vous ne soyez point amoureuses*), and this for many reasons which you shall hear. In the first place, I do not say, that no gentlewoman is, at any time, or under whatever circumstances, to love one person more than another. But if they do, it must be persons of respectability and of honour, and who will not fail to counsel them for their reputation and advantage. I say not, but there are many cases in which one may show a preference. But as to being so far gone that their affections master them, so that their whole heart and soul is at its mercy; as often as not it comes, that this unbridled sympathy, this maddest of passions, gets the better of them, and brings them under a cloud; sometimes without reason, and sometimes with. And this will come through the nasty curiosity with which nasty people will always pry after, and into such matters. Nor is such report, raised by the malicious, and these traitrous spiers, any light thing; for they will never be awearied of running down, and will ever prefer to blow abroad the evil to the good. Hence it comes, through such untruths, that they defame, and rob of her fair reputation, many an honest lady and gentlewoman. And, for this, every woman, to marry, should carefully abstain from any such countenance.

And another reason is, that no young woman, in love, can ever serve her God with that unfeignedness, which, or so entirely as, she did aforetime. For I have heard it argued by many, who, in their young days had been in love, that when they were in the church, the condition, and

the pleasing melancholy in which they found themselves, would infallibly set them brooding over all their tender, love-sick longings, and all their amorous passages; when they should have been attending to the service which was going on at the time. And such is the property of this mystery of love, that it is even at the moment when the priest is holding Our Saviour upon the altar, that the most enticing emotions come. And all this proceeds from the power of a goddess, called Venus, who was named after a planet, as I remember to have heard a worthy preacher say. And he said that the enemy got into a damned woman, who was marvellous lovely, and voluptuous; and that when he was in her he performed all sorts of lying wonders; so that the pagans looked on her as a deity, and entertained her as God. It was this same Venus that put it into the heads of the Trojan counsellors to send Paris, the son of King Priam, into Greece, to find a wife there, which she was to provide for him. And she was to be the most beautiful woman in Greece. And she was as good as her word, for he had Helen, the wife of King Menelaus. And out of this pretty piece of business it came, that more than xl. kings, and upwards of one hundred thousand persons lost their lives. And all this fell out at the instigation of this goddess, Venus. And a miserable goddess she was too; and that the whole affair was a scurvy trick of the devil is clear enough. * * *. And know, for certain, my fair daughters, that a woman, far gone in love, will never have her heart aright with God; neither will she ever say her prayers without wandering, nor have her ear so ready as heretofore, to attend to his service. And of this I will give you an example, which I have often heard appealed to. There were once two queens, beyond the seas, who went the length of indulging themselves in their infamous amours, even on holy Thursday and on Good Friday. And this they did, at mid-

night mass, in their oratories, and when the candles were put out. And the thing was so displeasing to God, that it was His will it should be discovered to the light; and, for this, they were wrapped alive in lead. And the two Knights, their paramours, were brought to an end as wretched, for they were flayed alive. So you may well see how these, their mistaken delights, were ill-regulated and were damnable; and how, by the temptation of Venus, the goddess of love and of voluptuousness, they so far forgot themselves as to sin thus heinously on a Good Friday; when every living soul should be on their knees, in prayer and in agony. And from this example you may see, that every woman, in love, is more liable to fall, in church, or at her devotions, than at any other times; and yet these are the places where she is most bounden to say her prayers. And this is one of the chiefest reasons why every young woman should curb all such inclinations.

And the other reason is, that many lay themselves out expressly to make up to, and try it on with all the good-looking women they meet; and they perjure themselves, and swear to them, that they love them for their sake's alone; and that they had rather die than so much as to offer to them, even in thought, an affront, or an unbecoming proposition; that they find their self-respect increasing, and all out of their fear of, and love to, them; and that, if they ever come to wealth and consideration, it must be entirely owing to them. They will give them, in a word, such reasons, and so impose upon them, that it is a very wonder to think of. And, to the back of that, they will, at one moment, sigh and groan; affecting the broken-hearted and disconsolate; at another, change their tune, and come the seventh heaven; so that, to see them, one would almost swear they were really what they pretended to be—true and loyal lovers. But all such

parties, practising all such deceptions, are no better than base deceivers of ladies and gentlewomen. And I tell you, they have so thoroughly got their lesson by heart, so often have they repeated it, that there is not a lady or a gentlewoman who would once consent to let them tell her their tale, but would be even forced to accept, as truth, all the lies they told her. And few are they, if they have not more than a usual quantum of penetration, who will not speedily be outwitted by them; so plausible are they; so oily, and taking in their manner. But very different are these from the real lover. For it is said, and I think rightly, that the perfect lover, that is, he who is penetrated with an heartfelt affection for his lady, let him but find himself in her presence, and he is so overwhelmed with agitation, and in such an alarm lest a word, or an action should escape him which might displease her, that it is as much as his life is worth to let an inkling of his case appear. And if he is really devotedly attached, I have not a doubt but he would let *ij.* or *iiij.* years to elapse before he would have the courage to open himself to her, or allow his secret to escape him. But not so is it with the traitor lover; for such make up to all they come across, as I told you before. For they are neither ashamed, nor yet afraid to say whatever comes uppermost; nor sense of decency, nor of conscience have they. And if they are paid off with a slap in the face from one, they look to have better luck next time. And everything that they can wheedle, or worm out of one, they carry to another; and this is their idea of sport. And in this way they go about, making themselves merry at the expense of ladies and gentlewomen; and alleging many a thing to have fallen from them, which God knows they never uttered. Besides, those to whom they tell, it may be, the truth, have always, themselves, something to tack on of their own. And in adding, they add rather the bad

than the good. And thus, by little and little, and by these wretched intimations, comes the ill repute of many an honest and a worthy woman. And, from all this, have a care, good daughters, how you listen to such talkers. And if you find, or suspect that they are trifling with you, or imposing on you; leave them to it, let them be as rusty as they will; or call some lady or gentleman to you, and observe to them, "Just do come and listen to this knight, or squire; did you ever hear so green, or silly a fellow!" And thus, by this, or some such manoeuvre, quash him and his talk together. And know, when you have served them this way one or two times, that they will give over. And, in good faith, at the length they will come to respect you, and be afraid of you; saying to themselves, This woman is of another stamp; she is not to be trifled with. And by this means, you can never be enrolled in their scandalous register; nor will you ever meet with blame or misapprehension from the world.

THE KNIGHT REPLIES.

Then I answered; "Dame, you are marvellous, wrong-headed, and unaccountable: you will not suffer your daughters to love *par amour*! I want you just to tell me why, supposing some good Knight, or other, admitting him to be a man of substance, and one entitled to pretend to their hand, was wanting to marry one of them; I say, why she should not love him?"

THE LADY REPLIES.

Sir, to this I answer, It seems to me, that every marriageable woman, whether maid or widow, may very possibly correct herself with her own rod. For all men are not of the one disposition: what will please one may very ill suit another. For there are many who are thrown off their guard with the warmth of the reception, and the good cheer that they meet with. And they fancy, or

hope the best, or take it for granted ; and are all in a hurry to ask the parents for their consent. But there are numbers of others of a very different sort, and who go another way to work. For they have their fears and misgivings ; and doubt in their hearts, if once they come to have them, that they might turn out frivolous, or headstrong, or, may be, light. And, for this reason, they take their time. And besides, by being in too big a hurry to show their willingness, many have lost their settlements. And, beyond a doubt, to carry oneself quietly and unpretendingly, and never to show, or but very slightly, a preference to one above another, is the way to be most respected and looked after. And these are they that are the soonest married. And you, Sir, once told me an anecdote, about yourself, to the purpose, and which I have not forgotten. Do you remember your telling me, how they were going to marry you to the daughter of a lord, but whose name there is no call to mention ? And so you went to see her. And she well knew, that it was question of a match between the two of you. And she gave you as hearty a welcome as if she had been acquainted with you for all your life ; so much so, that when you came to touch upon the matter of sweetness, she was not quite so much out of countenance but she could support it. Nor were her answers altogether of the most becoming ; but, on the contrary, warm, thoughtless, and indelicate enough. So that, out of her indecent impatience, you determined to back out of the whole affair. And had she only had the taste, or the sense, to have been a little more reserved or natural, you would have had her. And I have heard that she after fell into trouble ; but whether with cause, or without, I really know not. And you are far from being the only one who has told me, or whom I have known of, that has broken off, similarly ; all through the eagerness and thoughtlessness of those to whom they pre-

tended. And so it is a noble part, and fitting and creditable for every single woman to let her conduct be modest and reserved; more especially when in the eye of any whom she may occasion to fancy to be looking after her. I would not by this mean to say, that she is not warranted in showing them every reasonable civility and attention, such as were justified of their relative positions."

THE KNIGHT SPEAKS.

"How, Madame, and would you then pin them so close that they are never to be more familiar, or show themselves more happy with one than another?"

THE LADY REPLIES.

"Sir, first and foremost, I would not allow them to take any pleasure in the society of any less than themselves. I mean by this, that no woman is to love any man in a position inferior to her own. For, supposing she were to accept him; her family would justly look on her as having degraded herself. And those that place their affections in such quarters sin against their own honour, for such a step is to their infinite discredit. It is an evidence of folly, and a sure significance of an unsteady disposition, and an innate depravity of heart. For there is nothing that one should so much strive after, in this world, as honour, and to be held in the love and esteem of society and one's friends; all which, by this strange and unaccountable aberration, are forfeited. For from the moment that she ceases to hearken to the counsel of her kindred, and puts herself out of their government, that moment she is irreparably lost and dishonoured; as, if I chose it, I could prove to you, by the instances of numbers who are flouted and hated of their nearest blood. And, for these reasons, I forbid them, as a mother should her daughters, to have any such prepossessions, or to allow their

affections to wander to any beneath themselves; or yet again to those so much above them, that they could not have them for their lord. For great men, though they may care for them, yet will they never care to make them their wives. So, if they pay them attention, it will be for the horse and the harness; that is to say, for the gratification of their own carnal appetites, and that they may brag of their conquests in the world.

Next, as to those that love three other classes of people, as the married; clerks, priests, monks; or of the commoner sort, who are no better than valets and nobodies; I do not count them one whit more to be respected than, or even so much as, the commonest strumpet in a brothel. For, too often, women in a brothel are driven to their calling through poverty, or have been inveigled there by the miserable practices of procuresses, or the like. But all ladies, and women of condition, who have wherewithal to live respectably; either of their own, or by service, or any other way; let them be known to love such an order of people; and it needs must be, that it is out of the depravity of their hearts, and the great ease and wantonness of their flesh, which they will not have the principle to tame. Many esteem them, all things considered, bigger whores than the commonest in the streets. For they know well, that though married men may love them, they can never take them to wife; no more can the clergy, or yet the mere nobodies. Such kind of love can never be for the purchase of honour, nor will it ever fetch but shame and contempt, at least so it appears to me."

THE KNIGHT SPEAKS.

"Well, Dame, seeing you will not allow your daughters to love *par amour*, so long as they continue single; at least say, if you would permit of it, supposing them to be married? In fact, may they indulge themselves so far, to

pass their life more pleasantly, as with more to think of; as also to perfection their manners and their carriage toward people of honour. Besides, as I observed to you before, it would be no mean work, on their part, to make of a man, who, otherwise, might never be more than respectable, a person of importance and consideration."

THE LADY REPLIES.

"Sir, to this I answer; I certainly intend, and expect them to show themselves agreeable and cheerful among all manner of persons in, themselves deserving of honour, and even more so with some than others; that is, when such happen to be of an higher rank, or more winning or esteemed; and that, according as this may be, they are to distribute their attentions, and before all; and that they dance, and sing, and divert themselves with them innocently, and show them all reasonable regard. But as to loving *par amours*, once they are married, if it is not with that general love which we all owe to persons of honour, it is not to be. It is certainly allowable to love and respect the more meritorious; those who have been the most unwearied and indefatigable to purchase to themselves honour, either by arms or the sweat of their toil; undoubtedly these are to have the preference, to be looked up to, and waited on; and this is simply to be done out of a consideration for their virtues. But to support, that any married woman ought to love *par amour*, with a warmth that might master her; or to let any man pledge her his oath, that he had become her lover or her vassal; or again, that she should pass her word, or affirmation, that she would love him, henceforth, above all other men, is what, I think, no married lady, or gentlewoman, or any other right-principled woman is entitled to do. She should never put her honour, or her position to any such ticklish stake; and this for many reasons, which I will

give you. And one of them is what I mentioned to you already; that is to say, that no woman, in love, can ever pray to her God with the same devotion; or yet hear divine service with the like attention as before; for in these matters there is too much sympathy. And many is the woman in love, who, if at the moment that she hears the bell ringing for mass, at the same time hears her lover calling to her, 'Come along,' to any place, or for any matter, in which she can oblige him, will leave God to it, and his service too; and all to gratify her friend. Nor are the chances equal which way she will go, for she is at the mercy of Venus, the Goddess of Incontinence. And another reason is, that the mercer who sells the silk may easily manage to mix so much yarn with it, that it hardly longer can be called silk. That is to say, that a woman may, inch by inch, find herself receding from the affection in which she holds her lord, and conceding as much to another. By which transfer, he will be robbed by that other of what was his by right. For most assuredly no woman can have two hearts, so as to love one and to hate another. And even as it is impossible for a hound to course two beasts at the same time; no more is it possible for any woman to love, in her heart, and at once, her lord and her lover: one or other of them must be sacrificed, or betrayed. But God, and the sense of natural propriety, forbid her either to think of, or lend herself to any other. For, as the clerks and clergy tell us, God, when he created all things, joined man and woman together by matrimony, and commanded them, thenceforth, to live in no other state. And after, when he himself had come into the world, he told them, in open chapel, before all, that marriage was a mystery so appointed of God, that man and woman were no more two fleshes, but one flesh; one entity and one fragility; and that they were so to love one another that father and mother were to be abandoned,

as every other creature. Thus spake God with his own mouth. And it is for this that, at the door of the church, they are made to swear to love each other, and to support each other, sick or heal; and that they will not forsake one another, for better or for worse. * * *. And how, again, is any married woman to pass her oath, or consign to another her affections, without the consent of her lord?

* * * *

THE OTHER REASON OF THE LADY.

* * *. And if it comes, by any chance, that her lord hear word of it (*some scandal or other*), he will take a hatred to her, nor ever after will he love her from his heart; but he will be uneasy with her, and captious, as will she with him. * * *. And, for this reason, it is dangerous work for any woman to put her honour and her standing in society, and all the peace and profit of her marriage in any such balance, or to any such hazard. And, for this, I cannot think of allowing any married woman to love *par amours*, or to abandon herself to a passion that might lead her, she knew not where, and by which she would come under the dominion of other than her lord. For many is the happy couple that have been lost and ruined by it; and for one such attachment which has had a happy issue, an hundred have come to a miserable finale. And I will give you instances of parties who were shipwrecked and who perished through their loves. The Lady de Coucy and her lover both died out of this cause; as did the Knight and the Chatelaine de Vergy, with the Duchess. All these, with a host more, came to their end, a sacrifice to their own passions; and, the most part, without confession. How it fares with them in the other world, I will not pretend to resolve; yet, someway, I cannot help suspecting that the joys and the ravishments which they permitted to themselves in this, are somewhat

dearly retributed to them now. And so much for these delights of love; for one sweet they have an hundred sour; for one honour, an hundred scoffs. And it cannot be otherwise in such a world as this. And I have always heard it affirmed, that no woman whose heart is elsewhere can ever love her lord sincerely; nor, as long as she lives, ever prove again of felicity in the married state; that is, with her lord; nor anything save anxiety, dread, and alarm."

THE KNIGHT SPEAKS.

"Ha, dame, you amaze me, speaking in such a way of loving *par amours*. Would you really then be persuading me, that you have been, all your life, so cruel, that you were never once in love, or that you never yet permitted the sighs of any, though you may have kept it close enough from me, to reach your ears?"

THE LADY ANSWERS.

"Sir, in good faith, I hardly suppose you would believe me, even if I told you the truth. But as to being made love to, had I but given them any encouragement, many is the time I have seen the man who was willing enough to oblige me. But I invariably cut them short, or I called some one, by which means I forced them to give over, and put an end to their nonsense. And, on one occasion, I remember when a whole party of us, Knights and Ladies, were playing at *The King*, where each one has to tell in the ear, without ado, the name of his sweetheart; one of them told me that I was his, swearing to me, that it was the truth, and that he loved me above all the women alive. On this, I asked him, how long it was since it had come over him? And he answered, that it was two years, but he had never had the courage to break it to me. I then told him, that two years was nothing; that it was only a passing temptation; and that if he would but

go to the church and say an *Ave Maria* and a *Pater-noster*, and sprinkle himself with a little holy water, he would soon find himself better ; for it was perfectly impossible that anything serious could have come to a head in so little a time. He then asked me, what I meant ? On which I told him, that no lover should ever confess to his lady any such attachment, till he had proved himself for iij. and a half years ; so it was only just a mere passing temptation. And when he thought to argue the point with me, and convince me, I said to them all, out loud, ‘ Just listen to what this Knight says ! he says that he has only loved his lady for two years ! ’ On this he begged me to be quiet ; and, in truth, he never after spoke to me on the subject.”

THE KNIGHT SPEAKS.

Then I said to her, “ Madame de la Tour, you are insufferable, and marvellous and overbearing in these matters ; and, by your own confession, I doubt much, if you have, all your life, been so savage as you pretend to. You remind me of Madame de la Jaille, who also told me that never, save once, had she hearkened to the prayer of any ; and that was with a Knight. And then she set on her own uncle to listen to all that passed, which was an unpardonable treason ; and it was a miserable thing thus to compromise the Knight, who was expressing himself reasonably enough, and only thought to satisfy her ; little fancying that any one was by. Truly, the brace of you, I take to have been about as unconscionable and as hard-hearted a pair towards those who cried them mercy, as any two I ever heard of. And I farther hold her to be as bad as, or even worse than you ; for she gives in to your doctrine, that no married lady or gentlewoman has any call to love another than her lord, supporting herself with the same arguments that you do. In this I cannot agree with you, nor ever will. But as to my

daughters, you are at liberty to tell them, or teach them exactly what you like, and after, let reason carry the day."

THE LADY REPLIES.

"Sir, I pray God to turn the hearts of my daughters to honour as to prosperity: this is my prayer. For it is not my intention to impose my opinions upon, nor yet to canvass the conduct of any lady or gentlewoman; but only to speak for the instruction of my own daughters, over whom I have the direction and guidance. And I doubt not, but that all other ladies and gentlewomen are perfectly competent to govern themselves, with God's assistance, after the light of their own intelligence, and to their own honour, without any interference on my part, or any other's, so scanty taught."

THE KNIGHT SPEAKS.

"At least, Madame, will you allow me to ask you; supposing it was in their power to bring forward, and make something of a man who never, of his own accord, would have had the heart to stir himself, had it not been for the pride of making himself agreeable to them; and the hope of, through her, disciplining his character, and coming, one day, to be accounted among the good; I say, if by a little civility, she can make some poor unheard-of fellow, whom no one ever so much as thought of, somebody, and all he had done was for her sake, let me know if all this is not legitimate enough?"

THE LADY ANSWERS.

"Sir, I know well there are many ways of loving; and, if there are, so are some more allowable than others. But if a Knight, or a Squire, loves a lady, or a gentlewoman, in pure honour, being scrupulously nice of her good name; and with an eye simply to the benefit, the countenance,

the distinction, she may be willing to extend to him, and those like him, without any after-thought; I say, such love is beneficial, seeking nothing but good."

THE KNIGHT SPEAKS.

"Out, dame! and if he wants to kiss her, or embrace; you will not have it? Faith, it is no such great matter, as much does the wind."

THE LADY ANSWERS.

"Sir, what I am saying to you only touches my daughters: to no others do I address myself. It seems to me justifiable enough, and I will consent, that they should show themselves happy, animated, and pleased, and that they may embrace before all. I would not have them, through any straightlacedness, to be taken for prudes, if they feel inclined to enjoy themselves. But as to my daughters, who are now listening, I forbid them all kissing, or hugging, or putting arms round waists, or any such familiarities. For the wise lady, Rebecca, who was, above all, a wary and well-conducted matron, says, that the kiss is first cousin to the deed. And the Queen of Sheba says, that the first kindling of love is the regard, and that after the amorous regard they come to embracing, and next to kissing, on which follows what should not. And with which forfeit they lose as well the respect of God as of man. So, you see, the whole thing comes by an inevitable sequence. And let me tell you, it seems to me, that once they allow themselves to be kissed, they are at the mercy of the enemy, who is more than a match for them. For many a one that fancies she can go so far and no farther, finds herself mistaken in any such expectation, once giving the rein to such-like enticements. For even as one cup will want another, and as a spark is enough to set the straw on fire—the straw the bed—the bed

the room—the room the roof—and so the house; even no otherwise is it with these amorous dallings. For those who ask them to let them kiss them, or clip them round the waist, with other like licence, will soon have them in such a state that, of mutual consent, they will stick at nothing. And many is the misery has come, and every day is coming, of this first concession; and many is the reputation irreparably and infamously lost thereby. And I farther say; even supposing things had gone no farther, and yet they are seen kissing together, however innocently, it will never save them from being aspersed; for him or her who will have overseen them, will be as good as certain to tell it, and with it a good deal more to the back of it. So, for this reason, with many another which it would be too long to rehearse; any woman who permits such things, or kisses any but whom she ought, puts as well her honour, as her position in the eye of the world, to a very great hazard of a fall. So I desire that my daughters will rigorously refrain from kissing any, if it be not those of their own family, or their lord, or such as their parents shall require them. For to anything they may do, when enjoined on them, there can be no objection. And I also charge you, my good girls, not to be too fond of chess or tables; for it is a pastime that draws in its wake more than one unhappy consequence. For many lose at them, knowingly and deliberately, broaches, rings, jewels, and all sorts of things. It is a kind of work that opens the door to scandal, and no end of surmises. I have been told of a lady of Banière, a very beautiful woman. And they said that she had as many as xx. followers, all of whom were at her mercy. And she made them all fancy that she was in love with them. And so she frequently won of them, at tables, bodices, trinkets, clothes, pearls, and these of no mean value either. But, certes, she could not make it all appear so much above board,

but that, at the last, she was blamed and black-balled for it. And better for her reputation had it been that she had bought them with her last denier. So it is marvellous perilous for any lady, or gentlewoman, or woman of whatever degree, to follow any such course of life: for even the most expert, and the most straightforward, come, at the length, to be maligned, and talked of as the rest. On these accounts, fair girls, be advised, and never play with too much eagerness; let not your hearts be too far in it, nor be over-anxious to be winning this or that, however trifling. For those who are over-greedy to win such matters, as often as not are overreached; and what they fancied themselves to have won, was, in reality, nothing else than a present. And the woman who once comes to be known to be over-hungry after such stakes, as likely as not, will, one day, find that it is no such easy matter to decline them; and thus she will be no better than at the mercy of the donor. From this you will see, that all things, before being entered on, should be well looked to."

CHAPTER CXXV.

Of the Lady that proved the hermit.

This Chapter is omitted.

CHAPTER CXXVI.

Here speaks of a Lady who was rich and avaricious.

This Chapter is omitted.



CHAPTER CXXVII.

Of an honourable Lady.

I WILL now give you another example, but of a different character from the last. It is of a good lady who remained for a long time a widow. And her manner of life was as holy as it was noble. And every year, at the Feast of Christmas, she kept open hall for all comers, and would send into all the country round for more, so that her house was as full as ever it could hold. And you need scarcely ask, if she received them royally, or if every one was entertained as was befitting to their rank? And it was a very pleasure to see her condescension and familiarity toward all worthy women and persons who were entitled to her attention and respect. And there would be plenty of minstrels with their instruments. And she used to make them feel at home, and at their ease; and she would remunerate them magnificently, and send them away delighted; so that they idolized her beyond all measure. As a proof of it, when she died, they composed an elegy in her memory, of which the following was the burden:—

*Alas, to La Gallonière,
No more 'tis given us to repair;
Where in the hall, that lady dear
Our minstrel strains so loved to hear!*

And thus they lamented her. And besides this, it was her custom, whenever she heard that any poor or necessitous gentlewoman was about to be married, to have her clothes, and jewels and outfit ordered for her. And in any way that she could start her she would. And if she was unable to go herself to the wedding, she would send some of her ladies to represent her, and to do the gentlewoman honour. And she went to the interments of poor gentleman and ladies:

and she supplied to the mourners tapers, or anything else might be wanting; and when it was all over, she would return to her own house to eat; nor would she allow her people to put them to any charges. The course of every day was this:—to rise betimes; and whilst she was dressing, she had always ij. friars, and ij. or iij. chaplains, who chanted both matins and mass, but nothing more. And as soon as she was prepared, she would proceed direct to her chapel, and into her oratory, and there would say her prayers, as long as matins and mass were going on. And after this, she would go and put on her out-of-door things, and stroll about her meadows, gardens, and orchards, all the while in prayer, and converse with her God. Then she would come in and hear some of the shorter masses, and the grand mass. Then she would dine. And, after dinner, if she knew of any poor body sick, or in childbed, she would go and visit them; and she would take with her the most generous wine and the best of nourishment that her house might afford. And if it was some place that she could not get to, she would send a varlet, whom she kept expressly for the purpose, on a hack; and he was to carry it to them. And after vespers, she went to supper; that is, according to the season, for sometimes she fasted. And at night she would send for the steward of her house, and settle with him as to what was to be provided against the coming day, and arrange accordingly; for she lived by rule, and made it a point that everything likely to be wanted should be looked to beforehand. She would often fast, and was much given to discipline. And among her other mortifications, she wore hair next to her skin on the Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays. How I know this, I will tell you. The good lady died at a place which she had held in jointure, and belonged to my lord, my father. And when she died, we went to live there; my sisters and I;

but wee things, all, at the time. And when they took the bed to pieces in which she died, the shirt was found in the inside. And there was a gentlewoman in the room, a most worthy old body, who had been about the lady when alive. And she took the shirt, and laid it by as an heirloom ; telling us that it had belonged to her poor mistress ; and how she had made a rule of wearing it on three days in the week. And she told us all about her exemplary mode of life, and her habits ; and how she used to rise, at least iij. times in the night, and rejoice before her God ; and say her prayers on her knees. And she was accustomed to supplicate for the dead, and had trained herself to every kind of abstinence. And she was ever thoughtful of the poor, and charitable even to excess ; and everything about her savoured of heaven and heavenly things. The good lady I am telling you of, was named Madame Olive de Belle Ville ; and I have heard that her brother had xviiij. livres in rent. Yet, for all that, she was the most affable lady, and the most unpretending, at least to my mind, I ever met with ; and the one who had the smallest tincture of envy in her nature, and who thought the least of herself. And she would never permit any one to speak ill of another in her presence ; nor would she ever allow any to inform her of the infirmities or slips of others. And if they ever presumed to do so, she would take their part, and say, “ If it is God’s pleasure, they will come round ; and that no one could tell what, one day, they might come to be guilty of themselves ; and that none should judge another ; and that the vengeance and judgments of God were marvellous and inscrutable.” And thus she reprov’d and silenced those that, through their maliciousness, divulged the failings of others. And this she did without in any way affronting them, or yet irritating their feelings. * * Besides these, I have still treasured many another admirable sentence, fallen like-

wise from this good lady; though, at the time she died, I was only about ix. years of age. And you may take my word for it, if she led a pattern of a life, so died she a pattern of a death; so beauteous was it, it were a very tale to tell. But it would be too long. And as it is commonly enough said, "*Good life, good end;*" of the worth of the same, this lady's example is no mean evidence.



CHAPTER CXXVIII.

Here speaks of three lessons taught by Cato to Catony, his son.

This Chapter is omitted.



Here ends the Book of the Knight of the Tower.

DEO GRATIAS.



NOTES.

(1) The comparison here is a little more broad in the original, "*dont vous verrez leurs pennes derrière qu'ils ont crottées de boue à leurs talons, tout aussi comme le treu d'une brebis souillée derrière.*"

(2) The elements were, at this time, usually designated, *The Lord*, or, *The Saviour*. The passage in the text stands thus, *Sy cuidoit transir de la mort, et se fist apporter beau sire Dieux. Beau sire Dieux*, is, literally, Fair Sir God. *Beau*, fair, was an honorary, I fancy, seldom or never legitimately used, except to, or by the royal family. However, in the language of gallantry, or sport, or condescension, it is not unfrequent to find it employed to, and among the nobles. Instances of the same will be seen in *Saintré*.

(3) The *enemy* was the devil.

(4) Easy as it may be for us to smile, and make ourselves merry at the expense of our Knight, I really do not think, dispassionately looked at, that the following is one jot more extravagant, or gratuitous, than is, from beginning to end, that most noble of discourses, South's famous dissertation upon *Adam in Paradise*. "Now it was," says he, "Adam's happiness in the state of innocence to have these (*his faculties*) clear and unsullied. He came into the world a philosopher. He could see consequents yet dormant in their principles, and effects yet unborn and in the womb of their causes: his understanding could almost pierce into future contingents; his conjectures improving even to prophecy, or the certainties of prediction; till his fall it was ignorant of nothing but of sin;" &c. * * * "An Aristotle was but the rubbish of an Adam, and Athens but the ruins of Paradise!"

(5) The preacher alluded to by the Knight is probably the same that is mentioned by Addison, in a pleasant paper in the *Spectator*. He tells us that the hoods were then called *Fontanges*, after the name of the lady that introduced them.

(6) Our Knight has evidently here, as in dozens of other places, fallen into the mistake which I have elsewhere endeavoured to call the attention of the reader to; that is, accepting as evidence mere effusions of gallantry, pleasantry, or superstition. This is clearly some good fellow's tale, and a clumsy enough one too. I am certain that I have read it before, somewhere, as such; yet our Knight makes no scruple of referring to it as an occurrence which had actually taken place. Surely a moment's consideration might have shown him the folly of supposing that a person in that rank of life (at a time, too, when under-linen must have been so rare, and foul, and precious,) could have even passed a day in ignorance of the fact, as to whether his wife wore drawers or not?

(7) The few words in blank, here omitted, in the original, are, "*et faisoit soubz soy comme un enfant, &c.*"

(8) How our Knight was to reconcile to his daughters the testimony which he here bears to the character of Bouciquaut, with the anecdote which he had previously detailed to them of that worthy and the three ladies, I do not exactly see. It is to be presumed that he was only a young man at the time of the adventure, and an old one when he came to be so respected. As the story is told, however, it is by no means clear that matters ever went beyond a pretty strong flirtation; and supposing him to have had a "lady love" at the time, (and who, in such an age, was ever without one?) it is to the last degree improbable that so deep and wary a man would ever have proceeded farther with any such baggage. It may have been politic, and even enjoined on him by his *real* lady, as a blind to deceive the world.

(9) The family of *Landry, de la Tour*, was one of great antiquity. I remember to have read a very curious anecdote of one of them, though where, I cannot exactly recall, which is as follows; there are, however, many versions of it:—

Chilperic, who reigned in the sixth century, returning one day from hunting, almost as soon as he set out; in a merry mood, made for the chamber of his wife, Fredegunda, who had just risen. So, peeping in at the door, he saw her with her back to him, and her hair, which she was combing, all over her face and eyes; as is, with women, their wonted way. Presently entering, and stepping lightly on tiptoe up to her; he took his spur and gently drew the rowel down her neck and shoulders. On feeling the iron on her, the lady, tickled as well with the sensation, as pleased with the familiarity, nor ever once dreaming but it was her lover, Landry; or yet giving herself